Commentary

Volume Fifty-One, Number Six, June 1971

The Drugs of Habit

The Drugs of Belief

Samuel McCracken

Sensibility in the 60's
Daniel Bell

Doing History
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JEWISH RADICALISM IN AMERICA
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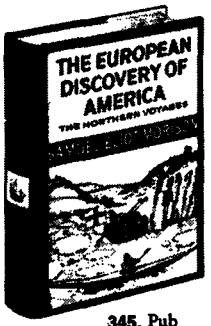

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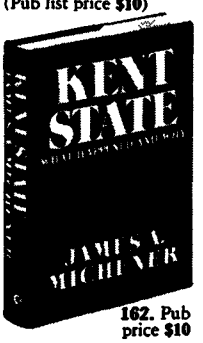

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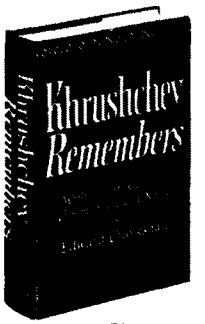

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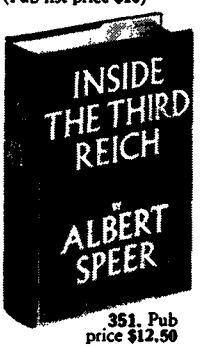

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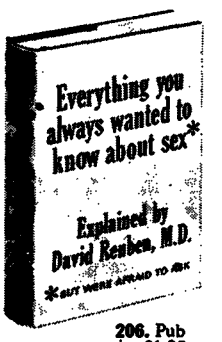

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Issues

Seducer of the Innocent

Norman Podhoretz

THE distinction Samuel McCracken (p. 43) draws between the drugs of habit (tobacco, alcohol, heroin) and the drugs of belief (marijuana, mescaline, LSD) is useful and illuminating but I wonder whether the drugs of belief, and especially marijuana, are quite so free of habit-forming properties as is often supposed. The conventional wisdom about marijuana is that it is not addictive, and yet I myself know a fair number of people who are certainly dependent upon it. They use it every day, they would be distressed and even frantic if it suddenly became unavailable, and they would have the greatest difficulty in getting accustomed to its absence. In other words, they need it quite as much as the average heavy drinker needs a drink. Why then does everyone go on saying that marijuana is not addictive?

Well, we know why the propagandists for marijuana go on saying it. Their purpose is to persuade us that marijuana has no harmful effects. Now I must confess that—perverse creature that I am—it was this extraordinary idea which first aroused my own suspicion that marijuana might be very harmful indeed. I had always considered it mildly dangerous, not so dangerous as heroin or cocaine but more dangerous than whiskey or tobacco. Nevertheless I was perfectly prepared to believe the people who began saying a few years ago that marijuana was on the evidence less harmful to health than cigarettes or alcohol. If the partisans of marijuana had kept the argument confined to these modest limits, I doubt that I would have resisted. But of course they rarely observed any such intellectual restraint, and as they moved more and more aggressively toward the position that marijuana was entirely and unqualifiedly benign, I found myself growing more and more suspicious. It was one thing to say that marijuana, while harmful in certain respects, was less damaging to the body than whiskey or tobacco; this was at least theoretically plausible. It was, however, quite another thing to say that marijuana, unlike every other substance known to man including even *milk*, was altogether innocent of any ill effects. Guided, then, by the usually reliable principle that the truth about anything was likely to be found in the exact opposite of what the most culturally respectable opinion said about it in the declining years of the 60's, I speculated that marijuana, far from being either relatively or absolutely harmless, might on the contrary be dangerous in a way that even its fiercest enemies could scarcely begin to imagine.

The two main issues into which the question of harm has generally resolved itself are whether marijuana is habit-forming in its own right and whether it leads to such admittedly addictive drugs as heroin whose sinister character is no longer denied by anyone. As to the first, I have already indicated my disagreement with the view that marijuana is significantly less addictive for many than alcohol. No doubt it is less surely addictive than heroin; unquestionably it is less addictive than cigarettes which are perhaps the most irresistibly addictive of all the drugs of habit. My own guess is that everything here depends on the person involved. A man I know successfully kicked a heavy and long-standing heroin habit but has been unable despite repeated and intensive efforts to stay away from cigarettes; he says that kicking heroin is as nothing compared with kicking cigarettes. For me (an addictive

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type if ever there was one—I can get addicted to peanuts or oranges), quitting smoking after having reached four packs a day was the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my life, while quitting drinking turned out to be easy by comparison even though I had also been a fairly heavy drinker who rarely passed an evening without a drink or two and often passed his evenings with a good deal more than that.

But the relative ease with which I stopped drinking by no means proved that I had not been addicted to alcohol; it only proved that my need for alcohol had been less acute than my dependency on cigarettes. I have never met anyone whose dependency on marijuana struck me as being so great as my need for cigarettes once was, but I have met many people whose need for it seemed comparable to mine for alcohol. Such people are called pot-heads; and they are addicts.

Thus, anyone who tells us that marijuana is never habit-forming is telling us a lie. Anyone who tells us that it is not necessarily habit-forming may be telling us the truth, but he is not thereby showing that marijuana is harmless, any more than the harmlessness of alcohol could be demonstrated by the equally truthful assertion that vast numbers of people who take it can either take it or leave it or can take it in moderation. To be sure, no connection has yet been established between marijuana and any physical ailment such as has been shown to exist between lung cancer and cigarettes or liver damage and alcohol. But it took a very long time before the case against cigarettes could be convincingly made, and life being what it is, lovers of marijuana have to expect that a similar fate will befall their own drug as the use of it spreads and as more experience with it becomes available to statistical examination.

IF IT is true that marijuana is not necessarily habit-forming, it is also true that marijuana does not necessarily lead the user into the use of heroin (which can serve here as a stand-in for all the harder drugs of habit). But of course it is equally true that there are very few heroin addicts to be found—not to mention users of the hallucinogens—who did not begin by smoking marijuana, often at a relatively early age. What this means is that marijuana can and does lead to heroin in a substantial number of cases—the number being roughly equal to the number of heroin addicts among us—and what this means is that marijuana is a dangerous drug.

But is no qualification to so brutal a judgment demanded by the fact that marijuana fails at least as often and probably far more often than it succeeds in leading its users into the use of heroin? I would say on the contrary that this quality of uncertainty makes marijuana even more dangerous, and especially to the young (who, if they are not exceptionally idealistic, are certainly exceptionally innocent). If marijuana possessed the inexorable power to drag everyone who ever used it into the hell of heroin, it would be feared as greatly as heroin is feared. Accordingly it would lose its effectiveness as a titillation and a lure. The pool of potential heroin recruits would diminish drastically in size, and with it the pool of potential suicides who might discover they had no other recourse but to go on living, possibly even to go on living well. For heroin, as everyone must surely have come to realize by now, *is* suicide, a sneaky suicide in which the victim, so to speak, shoots himself in the back. Marijuana adds to the sneakiness of the whole process by seducing the vulnerable into heroin and thus eventually into suicide with a promise of harmless delight—a promise it keeps just often enough to maintain its credibility in the eyes of all the innocent.

AND yet and yet: marijuana should be legalized, for approximately the same prudential reasons that Prohibition was once repealed. The problem is to legalize it without at the same time sanctioning it, and the only way to do that is to fight it, through argument and through education. It should, then, be legalized and it should also be exposed by those like Mr. McCracken who rightly see it as the lethal enemy of any intellectual community as well as those like myself who see it more apocalyptically as the lethal enemy of life itself.

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Letters from Readers

Jewish Radicalism in America

The following letters refer mainly to the articles which appeared under the overall heading "Revolutionism and the Jews" in our February 1971 issue: "New York and Jerusalem" by Walter Laqueur, "Appropriating the Religious Tradition" by Robert Alter, and "The Tribe of the Wicked Son" by Norman Podhoretz.—ED.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Most everyone of the "religious type" smiles wryly when he hears the quip, "Converts are the worst kind." They either know from experience, or have heard, that those *born* to a religious tradition frequently do not match the zeal with which a convert approaches his new religious identity. In Judaism, it is not uncommon to find the convert. Now the magazine and its to, and involved in, the practices of Jewish life, than one who has lived for a lifetime "within the *mishpocha*." And as often, they embrace and express the most fundamental forms of the faith with uncritical ardor.

COMMENTARY, under the aegis of its editor, Norman Podhoretz, is the most glamorous of the latest crop of Jewish converts. After years of supercilious sneering at Judaism and Jewish life in America, after years of condescension toward matters Jewish, after years of deliberately trying to "make it" as a generally intellectual, but decidedly not Jewishly-affirming journal, COMMENTARY has now decided to convert. Now the magazine and its editor pose as the great defenders of Jewish survival, and they do so in such extremely conservative terms that some of us who have been Jewish survivalists for a long, long time can only cry out: "Heaven help us! Preserve us from our new allies." If Jewish survival in America depends upon the cynical intellectual posturing of those who have only recently discovered the virtues of Jewish ethnicity but who display little if any real awareness of the more complex tensions and balances that Judaism contains at its deeper levels, then we are indeed in great trouble!

COMMENTARY's recent broadside, "Revolutionism and the Jews," is not simply a critique of Arthur Waskow's *Freedom Seder*. It is an attempt to destroy for American Jews the options of a perspective which is trying to help Jews, particularly young Jews, live through the shattering crises of Agnewism, My Lai, secret governmental surveillance of its citizens, calculated deceptions from the highest quarters about the war and about SST's and ABM's, and to do so without either losing their sanity, copping out of America, or giving up their tradition of faith. Waskow, and those of us who associate ourselves with him in these efforts to reassert the value of restructuring American-Jewish life, are *not* the villains in the piece. The real villains, the really wicked sons, are those who fail to see the truly Jewish quality of new (here some would want to read "radical") acts, thoughts, and reformulations of traditional Jewish modes. They are villains, not because they disagree with the product of these new efforts, but because they seek to deny the validity of the process. They betray an unutterable *chutzpah* in presuming to judge who among their fellow Jews is "kosher" and who is "*treif*"—who falls within the pale and who has strayed beyond the COMMENTARY line—who should be tolerated and who should be wiped out. Editor Podhoretz has the litmus paper, and he gives out the new Jewish seal of Good Housebroken Approval. An intellectual, pseudo-Jewish McCarthyism, presided over by COMMENTARY, is something new and ugly under the sun! That is what is anti-Jewish, masking in the guise of Jewish affirmation.

Norman Podhoretz and Robert Alter accuse the author of *The Freedom Seder*, and those who were involved in it either by actual participation or by lending their names, of being Jewish anti-Semites, which is to say "self-haters." And why? Because 1) the Waskow Haggadah, in their judgment, emphasizes the universal over the particular; and 2) it seeks to use the Jewish historical experience "as a point of departure for political activism." This latter emphasis seems especially noxious to Mr. Alter who, while describing *The Freedom Seder* as "a crude political rape of a religious tradition," at one point

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also suggests that its authors "lack any sense of humor" when they cast Grayson Kirk or Clark Kerr as pharaohs in the administration building, "harassing the young and breaking their freedom." This casting, he observes, "reflects a ghastly absence of perspective on the concrete historical meaning of oppression." But the issue is really joined over whether the tradition of Judaism—its rituals, its words, indeed its message—advocates or seeks to direct its constituents toward a specific societal direction or whether this past of ours has no particular social thrust. If the latter is true, *The Freedom Seder,* and all other similar attempts to give the present instructive relevancy from the past, is fundamentally wrong. If, however, the former is a true view of what Judaism is all about, then the excesses in *The Freedom Seder* (and there are some which I pointed out from the beginning), with which Mr. Alter seems to be obsessed, are, while worthy of note for corrective purposes, essentially unimportant. Certainly one cannot brand *The Freedom Seder* as anti-Semitic, or as a documentary expression of self-hatred, because it emphasizes the universal over the particular, the redemption of humanity over the saving of just the people of Israel.

Does Judaism have a particular social thrust? I believe it does. Do its constituents have an obligation to give this thrust particular, even political, application? I believe they do and I believe Judaism would counsel Jews so to act. That is what "the prophetic message" is all about; "to break every yoke," "to let the oppressed go free" (see Isaiah 58:6). Throughout our long history, this theology found particular, practical expression by those who embraced the faith. I am sure that the editors of COMMENTARY know enough about Nathan, Amos, Isaiah, Mattathias, and Stephen Wise to know that. None was content with "moral exhortation." Theirs was "a politics of God" which angered the men of their day precisely because it sought to apply the particular of Judaism to the universal of humanity and to do so in specific ways. They refused to be "religious fuzzies" moralizing in general or applying their message to Jews only. It is only as contemporary exponents of Judaism retreat into the social, religious, and political conservatism represented of late in COMMENTARY by the writings of

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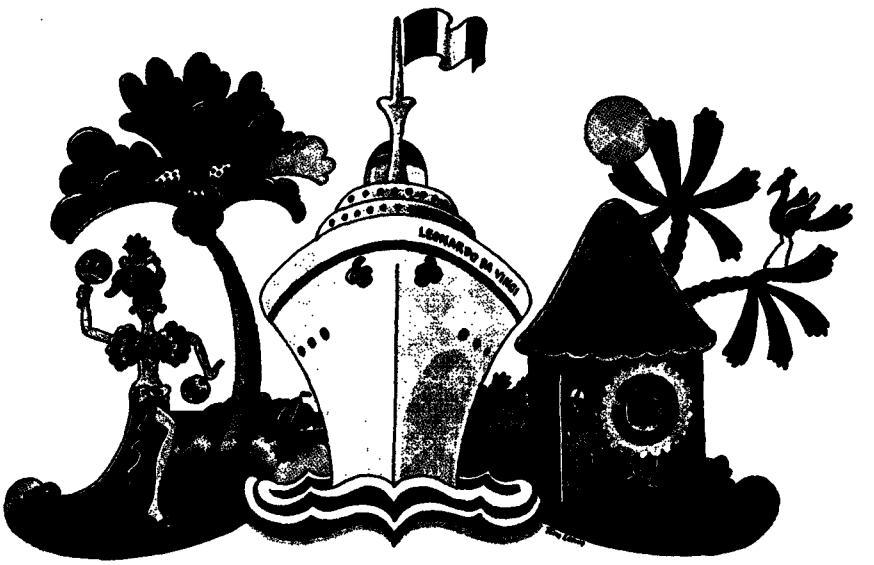

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Earl Raab, Nathan Glazer, Irving Kristol, Milton Himmelfarb, and Norman Podhoretz, that they distort this basic universal thrust of Judaism, deceive their readers into thinking that Judaism and separatistic theology are synonymous, and what is perhaps worst of all, turn off many of our best Jewish youth who mercifully, and despite the damnably conservative efforts of too many of their affluent elders, retain a commendable commitment to prophetism and incidentally flock in droves to the Freedom Seders (10,000 at Cornell last Spring and 800 in Washington in 1969 when the Freedom Seder was first celebrated). There they participate with gusto in a Jewish ritual which, in its cry for freedom and liberation from brutal political repression, makes contemporary enslavement seem even more terrible and intolerable than it already is.

The Freedom Seder is an effort which may even be more important than it is new. It represents an attempt by some of our more thoughtful Jewish youth to take the dim, starved, devitaminized awareness of their Jewish past which their parents gave them, and with that poor *yerushah* mold a useful Jewish identity. At least this way they might not end up hating themselves.

The Freedom Seder is only the first effort. Mr. Alter mentions such others as the Seder of the Los Angeles Radical Jewish Community. Different, equally radical, rituals and rites around other holy days and holidays will undoubtedly emerge from the creative minds of our Jewish young because some of the most thoughtful of them, thank God, are going to persist in using Jewish forms to find themselves—forms about which their parents knew too little, cared too little, and could not transmit to their progeny. To demean these efforts with niggling, nitpicking, snide criticism, or worse, to denigrate these efforts by cynically impugning the motives and the personal intelligence of those who so struggle (note Alter's comments on "Waskow's serious theology, if he has one"), is as tragic as it is ineffective. I would rather spend a Shabbat with the Jews for Urban Justice group in Washington or sit at Arthur Waskow's home Seder table than pass such moments at the tables of the editors of COMMENTARY. One wonders what they, or the members of their editorial board, do on Shabbat or for Seder. For that matter, one wonders where they are on Succot or Shavuot.

The inversion of values becomes completely apparent when one reads on the editorial pages of COMMENTARY, as well as in its articles, that those who embrace the universalistic over the particularistic are the "self-loathers who masquerade as self-affirmers." With this, COMMENTARY, for all its sophistication, reveals either its ignorance of Judaism (I can't believe that) or a failure in objectivity about Judaism which casts a shadow of suspicion on the validity of its credentials as a true commentator on the Jewish tradition. Surely, those who write for and edit COMMENTARY must know that the universalistic demand in Judaism is as compelling as the particular one. God's reminder to His people, as articulated through the voice of Deutero-Isaiah, is that "My house shall be called a house of God for all people." The gloss in the ninth chapter of Amos which raises as a rhetorical question, "Are ye not as the children of the Ethiopians unto Me . . . ?" and the efforts of the writer of the Book of Ruth to counteract the narrow particularism of Ezra, feature as prominently in biblical writing as any articulation of Hebraic particularism. The truth is that universalism and particularism stand in a polarized tension. A Jew must maintain both his particular appreciation of himself as a Jew, and his universal commitment to the larger community. This is what makes being a Jew an eternal dilemma. It is part of what has always made Jews cry out: *"Shver tzu zein a Yid."* At different times, under varying circumstances, Jews have emphasized one over the other, but the moment any Jewish community sacrifices one *for* the other, it either assimilates or retreats into a shriveling isolation.

There are some in American-Jewish life—and apparently the circle around COMMENTARY has become the latest to convert to this position—who say that these are times for Jews to concern themselves with Jewish things exclusively; who say that Jews must devote themselves *to* themselves, citing as justification Christian indifference to the cause of Israel's survival in the Middle East, or the prominence of some black anti-Jewish rhetoric which Jews now

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equate with a renaissance of anti-Semitism of major proportion, or the general drift to the Right in American thought. In those instances, if I may use similar words in different ways, one can discern a perfect example when one generalizes from the particular. It is a generalization which is already having disastrous consequences. It is a self-fulfilling prophecy and Earl Raab is perhaps its chief proponent, particularly when he writes in the pages of COMMENTARY ["The Deadly Innocences of American Jews," December 1970]: "The prevailing liberal directions are . . . becoming inhospitable to Jewish life. . . . The fact that so many Jews have actively participated—and still do—in helping to retract that political frontier [is] evidence of a massive and deadly innocence which affects not the Jews alone." Is the mentality of the JDL, the atmosphere of a Nixon-Agnew-Hoover regime, more "hospitable" to Jews?

In other words, anyone who refuses to see this current in American life and who subsequently refuses to "withdraw from involvement in the struggle to make a civilization out of our jungle" is naive—that is, "a simple son and, worse in some ways, a traitor to his Jewishness and his Judaism."

1984 has arrived early! For here is as classic a case of doublethinking as any I have read anywhere. It implies that one who sees Jewish survival from the context of human survival, and works out of Jewish motivation, is an assimilationist or worse, a liberal, 1940-style.

As a Jew, I look at everything through the magnifying glass of history. Reference to history is, in the final analysis, at least the first way to define a Jew. Historically, I know that a regressive society is bad for the Jews. I know that an economically unstable society is bad for the Jews. I know that a society in which Jews are either isolated, or in self-isolation from the larger society, is bad for the Jews. I know that a polarized society is bad for the Jews. I know an apartheid society is bad for the Jews.

As these tendencies exist in America, Jews have an obligation to resist them, if only out of the motivation of enlightened self-interest. Characterizing such efforts as naive does not at all change this necessity, for if these forces of drift to the Right and to conservatism continue unchecked, we may become "the first nation in history to go fascistic by democratic vote," and that would be disastrous for Jews and for everyone else. If the prevention of such a swing requires radical (read: new, different, and more activistic) tactics, then let Jews be in the forefront.

Jews must be more than just frightened by black-Jewish conflicts. It is the failure to think and act beyond the superficialities of that fright which is blindness. One who experiments with new forms in and for a Diaspora Jewish community which he believes must survive coequally with the community of Jews in Israel is not a negator of the tradition, but its preserver. Moreover, Jewish criticism of Israel can never be equated with Jewish treason. We must refuse to be driven into so narrow a mold. Ethnicity is great, but not sufficient for survival. Love of Israel, commitment to the Zionist ideal, never did, and must not now, demand slavish silence, and one's credentials as a Jewish self-affirmer must not be held suspect because he is sometimes pained by what he sees and who, because of this pain, cries out within the bosom of the Jewish family. Candor is often more important than popularity.

It is too bad that COMMENTARY chooses to run with, rather than buck the tide of, Jewish withdrawal from the larger society. By so doing, a journal with COMMENTARY's prestige only strengthens the shortsighted, bellicose, pseudo-leaders in our midst, and confirms a trend among Jews who lack real vision of what is fundamentally our stake in this country. Running back into our Jewish "Hobbit-holes" will not bring the Messiah. We cannot give up our willingness to take risks (that, too, is a very Jewish trait)—for when we do, we insult our heritage of political activism as a device to bring to reality what we consider to be God's will. We need to resist those who would draw us into the exclusivity of isolated particularism, as we need to resist their rhetoric of slander.

Finally, we need to resist the cheap appeals to our emotion which titillate our sense of guilt but which, even if followed, could not bring the messianic age.

There is no salvation in vigilantism, as there is no salvation in Jews copping out of America. The writer of Proverbs is more trenchant today than he was 3,000 years ago when he warned us, "Where there is no vision, the people perish."

(RABBI) BALFOUR BRICKNER
Union of American Hebrew Congregations
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I find it hard to believe that the articles on "Revolutionism and the Jews," particularly when accompanied by the editor's remarks, are anything but a planned campaign of vilification against the emerging Jewish Left, and against Arthur Waskow in particular.

I happen to share many of Robert Alter's reservations about *The Freedom Seder*. I too question the political appropriation of traditional symbols. Norman Podhoretz's use of the "wicked son" image to characterize Arthur Waskow strikes me as a prime example of such usage. Worse still: not only a political appropriation, but one involving personal defamation in public.

Waskow's efforts should be taken by the Jewish community not as evidence of self-hate, but as an attempt, albeit a sometimes clumsy one to relate Jewish symbols to a certain element of the young Jewish Left. Self-haters do abound in the Jewish ranks of the New Left, but they are not having Seders together, old style or new! Self-haters are to be found both in the New Left and within the ranks of established, respectable Jewish organizations. Surely the Left has no monopoly on escapist assimilation.

To set the record straight in one more area, it should be said that Waskow and others have spoken out consistently, within leftist circles, in *opposition* to the Fatah position, and demanding Arab recognition of Jewish/Israeli *national* rights in the Middle East. (See for example the recent position paper formulated by Waskow and Paul Jacobs.) Such a stance has not made them popular with the Left; but they have nevertheless stood up for "Jewish interests" which they feel to be justified. For COMMENTARY to revile such Jews as self-haters or "wicked sons" can only remind one of the old right-wing trick of lumping the entire Left together for purposes of defamation. Surely COMMENTARY can do better!

(RABBI) ART GREEN
Havurat Shalom
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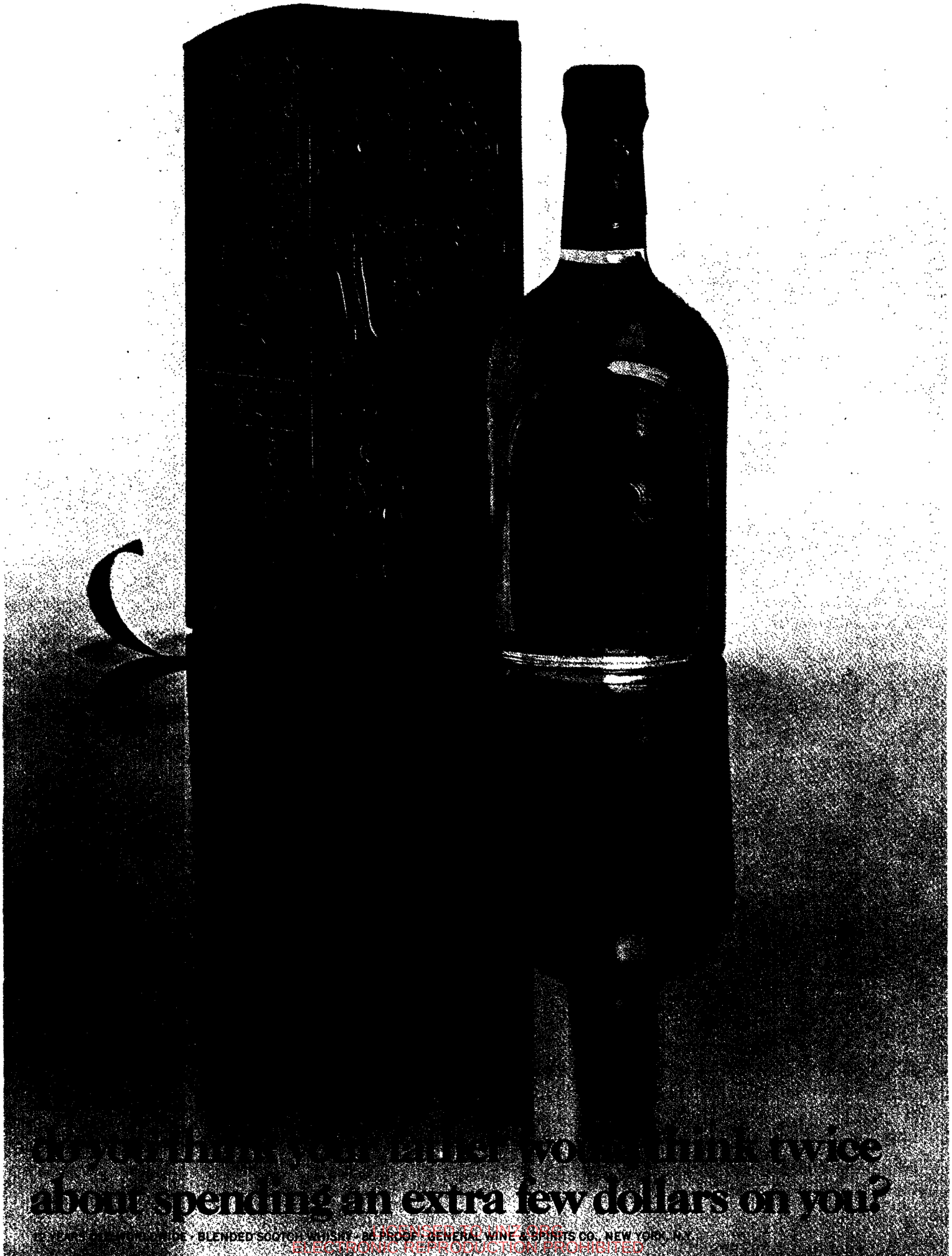

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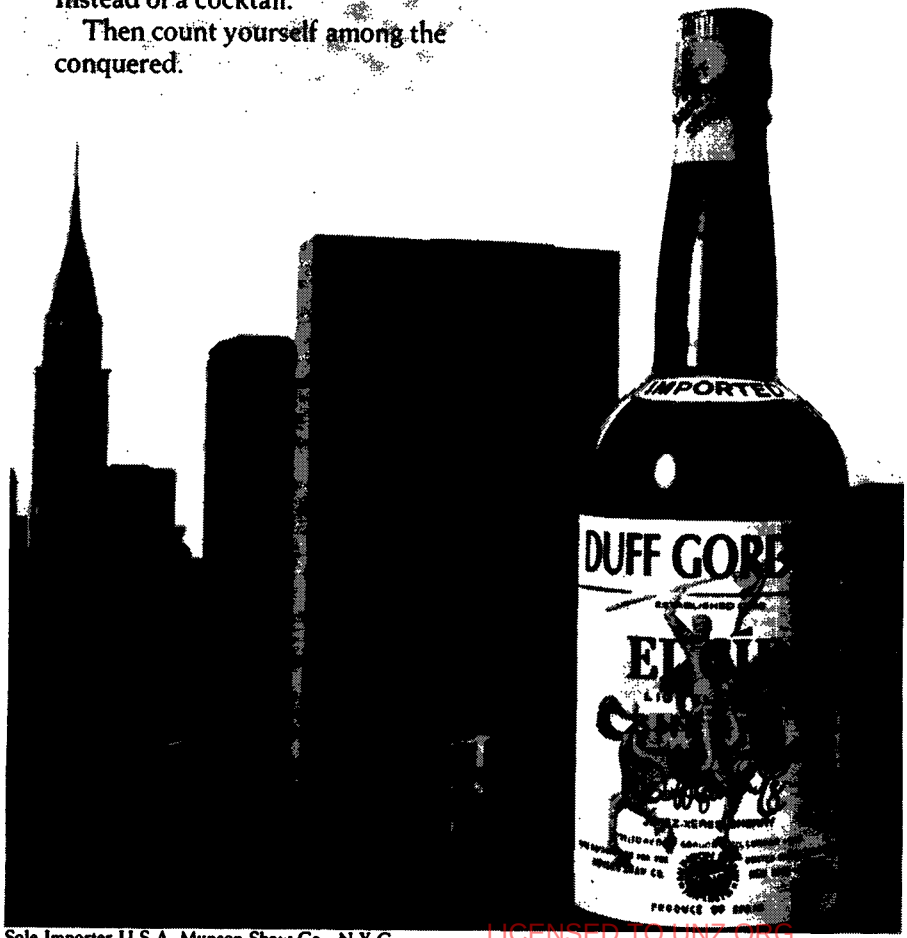

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To the Editor of Commentary:

Although Commentary's disparaging treatment of "The Counter-Culture and Its Apologists" [December 1970] did not give me cause to expect a warm reaction to similar developments in Jewish life, I was not quite prepared for the shrill and callous reactions of Messrs. Podhoretz and Alter.

To Norman Podhoretz, it may indeed be "certain" that the majority of American Jews have always been hostile to both the political and cultural manifestations of the youth movement. That remark, however, hides the obvious fact that American Jews, as a group, have not only been relatively tolerant of the new trends, but have been active in the leadership of both the "Movement" and the counter-culture. When Mr. Podhoretz is forced to go to the absurdity of *naming* the non-Jews in the Movement, he is admitting the essential weakness of his own argument, and reminds me of the classic paranoid Jew, whose modern type has been drawn so brilliantly by Philip Roth, who feels continually compelled to hit back wildly, and who, when pressed, will name all the Jews who have won the Nobel Prize, and other such things.

There is a good deal of careless talk about the "Movement," and the New Left in particular, in relation to young Jews. As far as I can understand, the "Movement" is a rather ambiguous and collective term embracing everything from liberal Democrats to the farthest Left points on the spectrum. By and large, the majority of "Movement" people are not anti-Israel, but are genuinely confused about the Middle East, with a sizable element who (especially during the past three years) call themselves Zionists. The New Left, on the other hand, which comprises only a small portion of the Movement, has distinguished itself by a fascinating kind of political insight according to which Israel is a fascist, colonialist power, and the Arab states are progressive and revolutionary. This is the same New Left which had nothing in particular to say when Czechoslovakia was invaded, and which speaks dreamily of a worker-student alliance in America.

Thus, it *is* possible, as Robert Alter realizes, for a Jew to be part of the Movement without necessarily rejecting his own identity. On the contrary, thousands of young Jews are now realizing that Israel

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is the culmination of the Jews' struggle for national liberation, and that, furthermore, there is no great inconsistency between being a Jew and a leftist in America. Some, like Arthur Waskow, would go further, and claim that to be a Jew *means* to be a revolutionary.

Young American Jews are currently involved in a variety of projects which would suggest that the revolution and the Jews are not as far apart as COMMENTARY might wish them to be. They are active on behalf of Israel, often critical, but never suggesting that it hasn't a right to exist. They are publishing journals, newspapers, operating free Jewish universities, and forming *havurah* groups.

Finally, I am shocked by COMMENTARY's unwarranted and rather vicious attack on Arthur Waskow. Many of us in the new Jewish counter-culture find it ironic that publications like COMMENTARY should call *anybody* a self-hating Jew, least of all someone who is honestly attempting to come to grips with his heritage, in his own particular way. Although I am not particularly impressed with *The Freedom Seder,* it has been a great force in creating a radical Jewish entity. To disagree with Waskow is one thing; but to call him, contemptuously, a wicked son, clearly demonstrates just how smug COMMENTARY is, and how wide the gap between the Jewish Establishment and the young.

BILL NOVAK
Editor, *Response*
Waltham, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

On first reading, "The Tribe of the Wicked Son"—together with some of the other articles on "Revolutionism and the Jews"—seemed to call for a defense of particular persons who had been subjected to personal attack, the meanness and intensity of which were quite shocking. The February issue as a whole also seemed to require some response to the rather consistent post-1967 COMMENTARY disparagement of those Jews who, in the tradition of Samuel, continue to regard "like all the nations" as perhaps the supreme example of Jewish "self-abasement." But that was only on first reading.

The real question would seem to be: Is COMMENTARY any longer to be taken seriously as an honorable publication? In a magazine sponsored to "enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of

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Jewish concern, to fight bigotry and protect human rights . . .," what place has the malice and personal abuse of "The Tribe of the Wicked Son"? And if there is something to Nathan Glazer's insistence on the need for liberalism, tolerance, and nonviolence, how shall we regard a publication whose editor so grossly violates these very qualities? . . .

(Rabbi) Everett Gendler
Stoughton, Massachusetts

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . Norman Podhoretz writes and implies all kinds of horrendous evils about the "Movement" and then zooms in on *The Freedom Seder,* claiming for it and for its supporters—including "prominent rabbis" and then mentioning Rabbi Balfour Brickner by name—that it is more than self-hatred; that it in fact creates anti-Semitism. If I believed, which I do not, that a Jew could create anti-Semitism, then Mr. Podhoretz himself would be my candidate. . . .

It seems to me that the accusations Mr. Podhoretz levels against Arthur Waskow, Rabbi Brickner, and others for betraying "one of the most essential principles of the religion of [their] fathers" in truth apply to editorials like "The Tribe of the Wicked Son" in which Mr. Podhoretz attempts to defame fellow Jews with whose viewpoint he disagrees.

(Rabbi) Robert E. Goldburg
Congregation Mishkan Israel
Hamden, Connecticut

To the Editor of Commentary:

Early in his article Robert Alter castigates the Jewish Liberation Project for combining Jewish tradition with revolutionary struggle. Somewhat further on, in a more complimentary vein, he quotes extensively from the *Jewish Liberation Journal* "issued apparently by students having some connection with Columbia University." If Mr. Alter had done his homework, he would have been aware that the *Jewish Liberation Journal* is published by the Jewish Liberation Project, which is in turn affiliated with Americans for Progressive Israel—Hashomer Hatzair. . . .

It seems to me that Mr. Alter does not understand that "revolutionary struggle," as it is used by the young Jewish radicals of today, is deeply rooted in the idealistic, humanitarian tradition of the Prophets. Although the Prophets advocated feeding the hungry, clothing the poor, and turning swords into plowshares, they were not noted for their patience and/or humility. They were angry, often bitter men. What makes the youth of today bitter? Could it be that many of the actions of the Jewish Establishment are responsible for turning off Jewish youth? . . . At the same time that Commentary starts labeling "wicked sons," it should also start putting the finger on the "wicked fathers" who debase and dishonor our most sacred and precious heritage. "Justice" and "righteousness" are two of the most frequently used words in the Prophets. How do justice and righteousness manifest themselves in the world? This is the question which preoccupies our young people, and thank God for it.

Irma Weinstein
Baltimore, Maryland

To the Editor of Commentary:

We would like to congratulate Robert Alter for a fine article. It is, to date, the most knowledgeable and sympathetic article in Commentary (in fact, in the "overground" Jewish media) concerning radical Zionists.

Mr. Alter commits, however, some serious errors. The Jewish Liberation Project is not connected with Arthur Waskow and the Jews for Urban Justice. The Jewish Liberation Project, in fact, was one of the groups which founded the Radical Zionist Alliance. Itzhak Epstein, whose article in the *Jewish Liberation Journal* is quoted quite sympathetically later on in Mr. Alter's article, was a founding member of the Jewish Liberation Project. . . .

Secondly, Mr. Alter compares the *aliyah* orientation of the new radical Zionists to the "Zionist youth movements of the late 40's." Some of us, he says, actually go on *aliyah* "soon after graduation." We suggest that the above analogy might have something to do with the fact that the *halutzic* Zionist youth movements, which are still very much alive today, and which began developing concepts of radical Zionism in the early 60's, played a key role in the formation of the Radical Zionist Alliance. Habonim and Hashomer Hatzair are the two largest constituent organizations within the Radical Zionist Alliance.

Finally, Mr. Alter's identification of Ber Borokhov as the leader "in the pre-Revolutionary period of the Poalei Zion, the Russian Left

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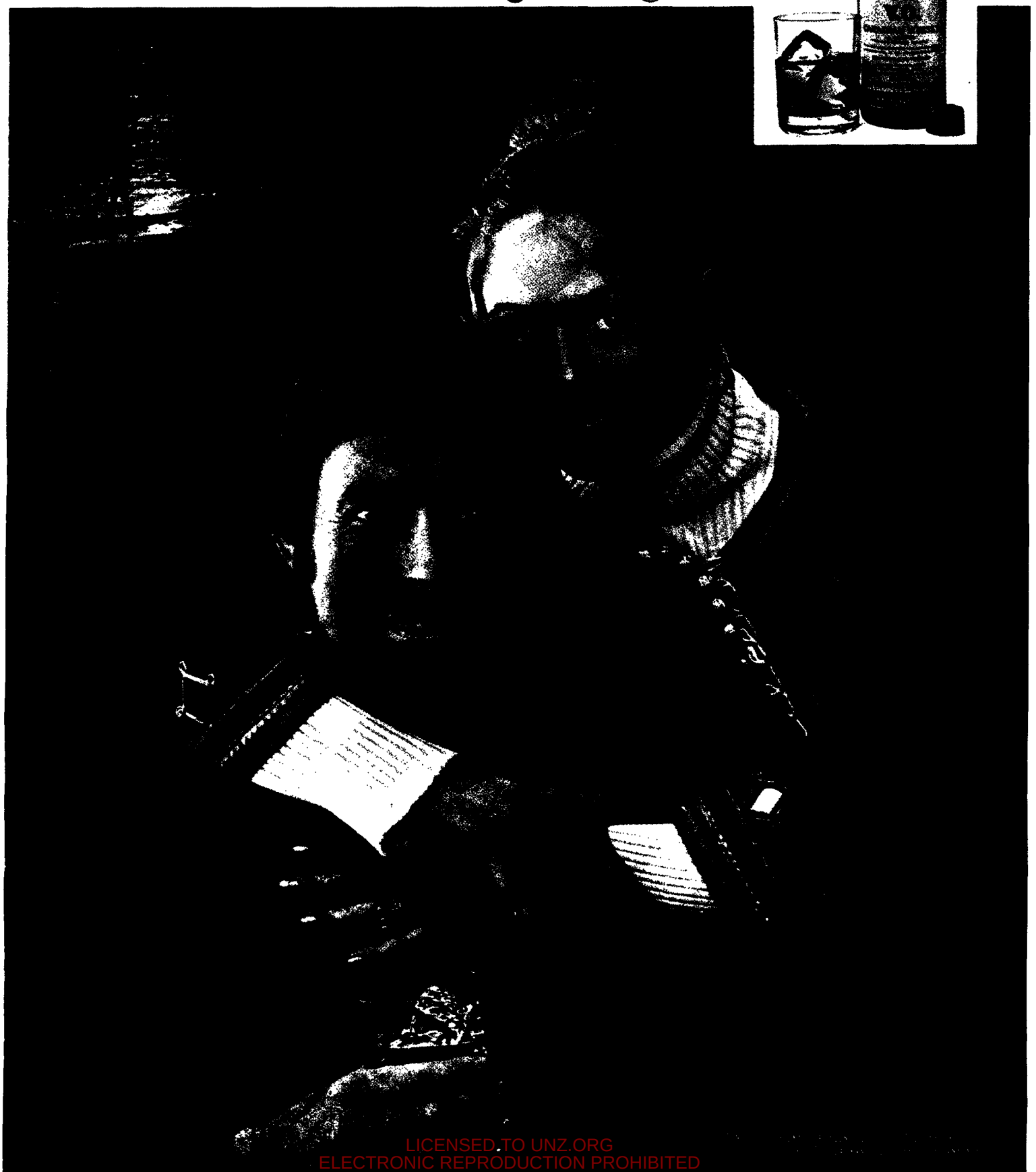

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Labor Zionists" is misleading. Poalei Zion is actually the world Labor Zionist movement, which includes among its constituents the Israeli Labor party, and to this day regards Ber Borokhov as a seminal theoretician of the entire movement.

We were, however, rather disturbed by Walter Laqueur's article. It seems to us that his article is filled with the same illogic and Manicheanism with which he faults the Jewish radicals. He writes: "The vast majority of European Jewry west of Russia flirted with radical politics only for relatively brief periods in the wake of a widespread revolutionary wave, such as before and during 1848." But Western European Jewry was a minority of European Jewry. The most populous and culturally central community of world Jewry lay east of the Oder-Neisse. These Jews were neither "middle-class in character," nor "middle-of-the-road liberal." They were mostly poor, and supported on a mass scale ideologies of revolutionary socialism. In interbellum Poland, the Jewish socialist Bund was one of the dominant parties of Polish Jewry. While the Western European Jewish communities were busy battering down the barriers which prevented their entry into society. . ., Eastern European Jews were, quite literally, laying the foundations for a socialist Jewish state.

Mr. Laqueur says that "not one of the ideologists of revolutionary socialism, for instance, foresaw that in our time internationalism would give way everywhere to national socialism—a trend which has had unfortunate consequences for Jewish socialists, for Jewish communities, and for the world in general." If by "national socialism" Mr. Laqueur means socialist nationalism (and not fascism, which caught no Marxist by surprise), some Jewish revolutionaries did predict this trend. Some examples are Moses Hess, Nachman Syrkin, Ber Borokhov, Berl Katznelson, David Ben-Gurion, and Golda Meir.

Mr. Laqueur quotes from a certain William Zukerman, who stated in 1937 that the Jews had a future in Germany and would outlast the Nazis there. "Zukerman's thesis," he writes, is "incredible to read today." He then writes: "Zionist thought has never quite accepted the fact that—a few idealists apart—people leave their native lands only because of extreme economic or political pressure, of the kind that is unlikely to arise in America." If Zukerman's thesis is incredible to read today, how much more incredible is it to see Mr. Laqueur quote him and then draw the same conclusions about American Jewry two pages later. Revolutionary socialist Jews like Borokhov, Arlosoroff, and Ben-Gurion predicted disaster for the Jews as long as they existed as a nation-class in the Diaspora. No doubt there are other factors involved, for economics, sociology, and politics are at all times inexorably intertwined. Arlosoroff is ridiculed by Mr. Laqueur for conjecturing, in 1919, that there would eventually be an outcry against Jewish dominance of the media and literary establishments. Yet today we are seeing the beginnings of a cultural reaction in America, led by the Vice President himself, against precisely those parts of the media which are heavily populated by Jews. Can one think of a more apt euphemism for Jews than "effete intellectual snobs"?

Mr. Laqueur writes: "Various interpretations have been offered to explain the particular fascination exerted by the party of revolution on the Jewish intelligentsia. Of these, the anti-Semitic thesis known as the 'ferment of decomposition' has been advanced in different form in many countries. Briefly it runs as follows: unable to establish a state of their own, reduced to a marginal, parasitic existence among the peoples of the earth, Jews developed over the centuries an overwhelming destructive urge. Having no fatherland, they wished to deny one to everybody else as well."

This statement, which is classed as an "anti-Semitic thesis," is a simplistic and negatively-worded version of a generally-held Zionist concept. To quote Mr. Laqueur again: "To the generation of Israelis who grew up on Berl Katznelson and shared his contempt for Jews willing to fight the social and national struggle of every people but their own, the Movement of the 1960's would have appeared totally incomprehensible." Quite simply, the Jew who has no relationship to his own people, to his particular national identity, is always the first to sacrifice himself on the altar of "internationalism," because he is the last to recognize the truly national character of the struggles around him. Who else but an internation-

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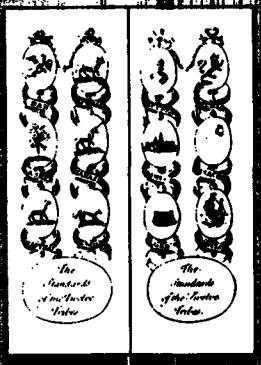

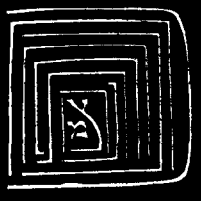

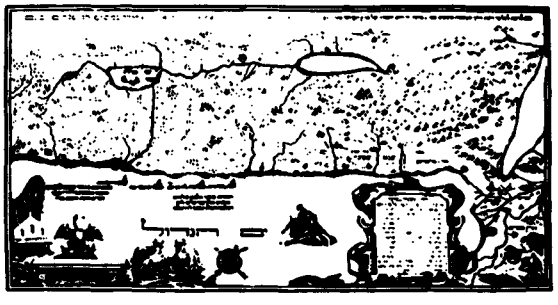

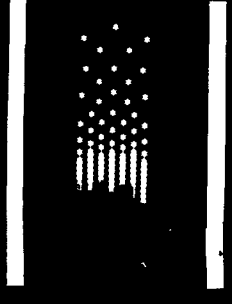

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alist Jew would misunderstand the nationalism and particularist essence of the Vietnamese struggle? Unfortunately, Mr. Laqueur is not the first, nor the last, to call Zionism anti-Semitic.

Mr. Laqueur writes: "The binational solution that some American radicals have advanced may indeed be a wonderful concept, but where in the world has it ever worked?" This is misleading. The uneducated reader might suppose that American radicals invented this solution. In truth, it was advanced by more than one Zionist group, including Mapam, and by such notables as Martin Buber. This *yichus* grants the solution no greater validity, but it is still important to know the facts.

The "strange and contradictory" nature of Mr. Laqueur's argument pales by comparison with his abysmal ignorance of his main topic. Mr. Laqueur asserts that our "doctrines betray strange and contradictory ideological influences." Certainly if he is going to lump together the totalitarian (anti-Israel) Left, the Jews for Urban Justice (a quasi-religious libertarian Left group), *ACIID* (a magazine subtitled "A Critical Insight into Israel's Dilemmas"), the *Jewish Radical* (a left-wing Zionist newspaper), and Havurat Shalom (a traditionalist religious seminary), he will find contradictory streams. . . .

It seems to us that one cannot intelligently discuss "Revolutionism and the Jews" without a basic working understanding of the socialist-Zionist tradition. The Borokhovist analysis of Diaspora Jewish life, faulty as it may be, is far more relevant to America today than Mr. Laqueur's indecision on the question of American Jewry. . . .

DAVID TWERSKY
J. J. GOLDBERG
Habonim and Radical Zionist Alliance
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . None of the articles in the February issue explains the component parts and main ideological tendencies of the new Jewish radical movement . . . which, by even the most conservative estimates, includes more than fifty local and national organizations, newspapers, magazines, free universities, and *havurot*.

Reading the February issue, one wonders if COMMENTARY intended to convey a negative impression of the totality of this movement by focusing on the views of one relatively small segment of the whole, those people who follow the ideology of Arthur Waskow. While I too am quite bothered by Waskow's views on Israel and other subjects, I am even more upset when I see the whole Jewish radical movement attacked as if Waskow were somehow its main spokesman. . . .

The article by Walter Laqueur, moreover, not only blurs the distinctions between the pro-Israel and anti-Israel sectors of the Jewish radical movement, but also leaves the reader with no clear picture of which "Jewish radicals" he is talking about—the ones inside the new Jewish movement, or those New Left radicals who just happen to be Jews (Rubin, Hoffman, Rudd, etc.). . . .

Mr. Laqueur makes quite a number of points about Jewish radicals: that they fail to integrate theory and practice with respect to Israel, that they are engaging in a form of assimilation, that they are moving farther and farther away from being "good Jews," and so on. But he fails to specify, upon making each of these points, whether he is talking of the neo-Bundists, the Borokhovists and other radical Zionists, the Rubins, Rudds *et al.*, or all of these groups. One is tempted to tell him to read Robert Alter's article in order to understand the strong differences among these people. . . .

The most misleading point in Mr. Laqueur's article is his contention that even those Jewish radicals who express concern for Israel "are increasingly preoccupied with American domestic policies" and that "specifically Jewish preoccupations will gradually be relegated to a lower order of importance" by Jewish radicals. Anyone who knows anything about the new Jewish movement knows that this is not so—and that, in fact, quite the opposite is the case. Throughout the new Jewish radical movement (even, astonishingly enough, among the non- and anti-Zionists) specifically Jewish preoccupations (Israel, Soviet Jewry, Jewish education) are almost totally superseding the previous priorities of young Jewish radicals (the black movement, Vietnam, pollution, etc.).

Either Mr. Laqueur is almost totally ignorant of the new Jewish movement, or else he prefers, for some unexplained reason, to shift from attacking one kind of Jewish radical (the Mark Rudd-Jerry

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Rubin variety), to attacking another kind (a Borokhovist, or maybe a Waskow follower) without telling us that he is shifting. By doing this he blurs all the important distinctions and does a grave disservice to his readers and to one of the most promising sectors of American-Jewish youth.

ROBERT FRANKEL
Somerville, Massachusetts

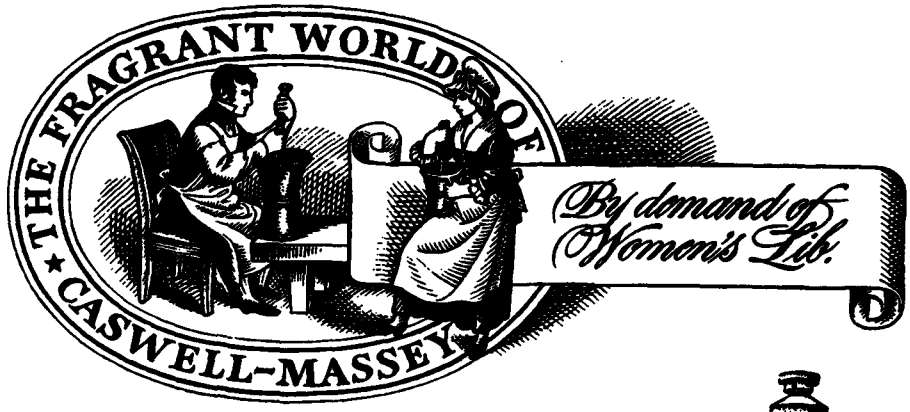
TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A young, conscientious, progressive Jew could not help but be thrown into the depths of despair should he take Walter Laqueur's "New York and Jerusalem" seriously. Fortunately most of them won't. The reason is simple. A serious reading of Mr. Laqueur's article betrays that he is very unfamiliar with what is taking place among concerned Jewish students. . . . For example, Mr. Laqueur lumps groups such as Jews for Urban Justice, Na'aseh, *ACIID*, the Free Jewish Universities . . . and the *Jewish Radical* at Berkeley together. However, there are basic differences . . . among these various groups. . . .

In addition, Mr. Laqueur fails to take into consideration the many non-radical Jewish student groups that have arisen in the last several years. . . . These student groups have not only been in the front line in countering the hostile attacks on Israel, but indeed have projected a very positive program that has succeeded in greatly expanding the university course offerings on Jewish subjects, in increasing the number of students going to Israel, in issuing publications, and in conducting a tremendous range of student-led activities. . . .

What are the alternatives Mr. Laqueur offers young Jews? One alternative is that of being traditionally religious, which is an adequate choice, but the other alternative involves a lukewarm sort of suburban liberal Judaism in which Jewish commitment is very shallow. . . . This latter alternative is the one that is so unpalatable to many of our most concerned young people and perhaps this is what is frightening to the assimilated editors of COMMENTARY.

In the past few years we have seen the rise of many free Jewish universities encompassing several thousand Jewish students. When was the study of Torah ever rejected as a positive expression in



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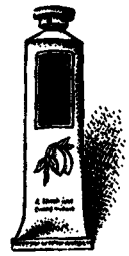

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Jewish life, except in Mr. Laqueur's article?

A reading of the Jewish student press over the last few years leads one to the opposite conclusion from Mr. Laqueur's: not, as he claims, that students are becoming less and less interested in Jewish things, but rather that they are becoming more and more interested since at least 90 per cent of the material in these publications is devoted to issues directly and particularly of concern to the Jewish community. . . .

And finally, Ber Borokhov did offer a solution and a vision to young Jews, not only in this generation but in generations preceding them. The fact of the matter is that the vision that built up the Zionist movement and *Eretz Yisrael* was the vision of the socialist-Zionist thinkers: utopians such as A. D. Gordon, social democrats such as Nachman Syrkin, Marxist democrats such as Ber Borokhov, and religious ideologists such as Rav Kook and some of the predecessors of the Zionist movement. The Western Jews within the movement, such as Max Nordau, regardless of their brilliance in their particular fields, were not sufficiently steeped in Jewish tradition to conceptualize a vision that would have more than a temporary appeal to the Jews of their day. Nordau himself excelled in sociological analysis and did not even pretend to offer a vision, and this is the position Mr. Laqueur is in today. He offers students the alternative of sociological analysis when the crying need among the Jews of every age is a vision. It is clear to me that his exercise in student-baiting is basically unhealthy to the adult community which seeks to understand student life, and to understand that without these concerned Jewish students, the future of Jewish life in this country is rather bleak, pallid, and of little value.

PHILIP HORN
American Zionist Youth
Foundation
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

The articles on "Revolutionism and the Jews" seem to call for a new evaluation of the old saying, "But is it good for the Jews?" . . . My father's Iron Cross was earned for heroism under fire during World War I but it did not save him or my mother from death in a concentration camp. My aunt and her family survived the Nazi camps only to be taken prisoners by the Russians in whose camps she and her husband perished. One of my mother's cousins was blown up in Haifa harbor by the British while trying to enter Israel. . . . Yet I was raised with the philosophy that one should become totally involved with all the ills of mankind . . . and never look at a situation only "through Jewish glasses." Well, I have now come full circle. . . .

We have tried for many centuries to help find the answers to what is wrong with mankind. . . . From now on I think we should give the broad view a rest and devote our thinking to the much simpler question: "But is it good for the Jews?"

GRETEL BLEICH RUBIN
Rye, New York

WALTER LAQUEUR writes:

Messrs. Frankel, Horn, and Goldberg and Twersky have one partly justified complaint. Toward the end of my article, I mentioned several Jewish youth groups, but since I had neither the inclination nor the space at my disposal to enter into a detailed discussion concerning their character, or the differences among them, perhaps I shouldn't have mentioned them at all. "Bracketing" is problematical; sometimes it may well be inevitable, as shown by Mr. Horn, who complains about it, yet elsewhere in his letter mentions Borokhov and Syrkin—and Rav Kook—all in the same breath. Mr. Frankel in his letter brackets Mark Rudd and Jerry Rubin—neither will be overjoyed.

My article was devoted to the historical sources of Jewish radicalism and some of its present-day manifestations; it dealt with attitudes, states of mind. Nowhere did I indicate that this was meant to be an exhaustive survey of the organizational structure of the Movement, with its dozens of small factions. It is quite true that I did not "offer a vision" (Horn): a historical essay is hardly the right place to deal with the future of the Jewish people as well. I have written on and shall return to the subject elsewhere.

Messrs. Twersky and Goldberg devote considerable space to refuting points I did not make, and in the process distort (sometimes outrageously) what I did write (about Zukerman, about the "anti-Semitic character of Zionism," etc.). Why can't Johnny read? "Western Euro-

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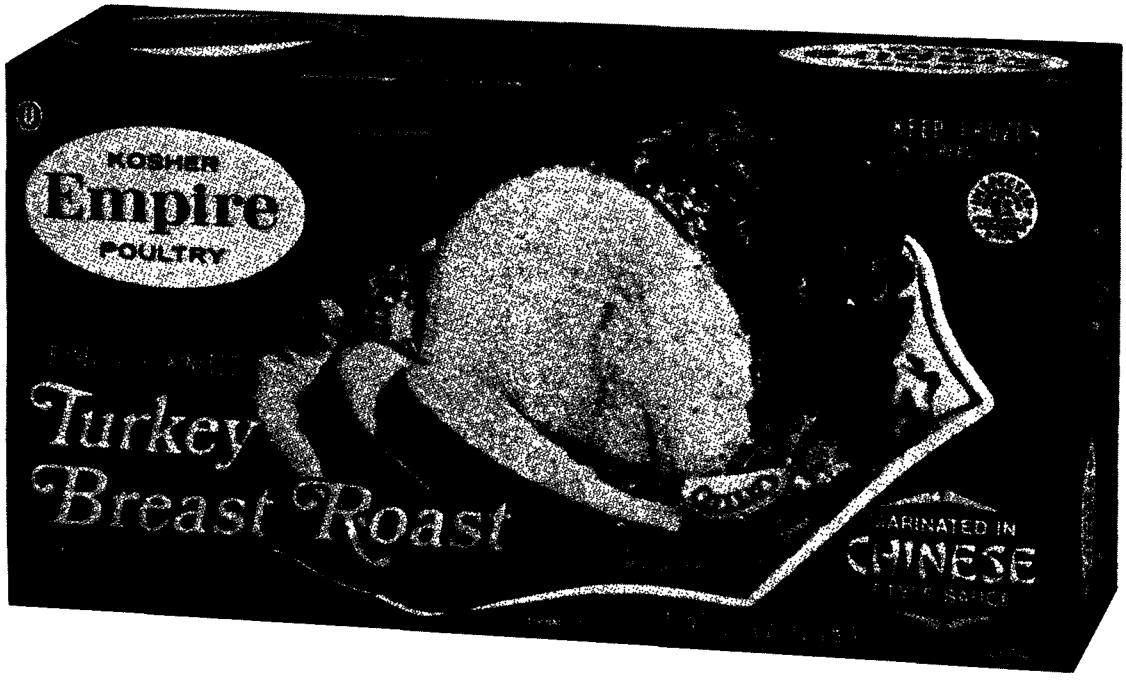

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pean Jewry was a minority of European Jewry. The most populous and culturally central community of world Jewry lay east. . . ." Very true. So is the statement that Beethoven wrote nine symphonies. What has it to do with my argument? Did I claim that American-Jewish radicals invented the binational solution? . . .

I sincerely hope that Mr. Horn's and Mr. Frankel's optimism with regard to the growing Jewish and Zionist enthusiasm among Jewish radicals is well-founded. I am not a "student-baiter," but a believer in democratic socialism, and for that reason I feel that little good will emerge, as far as Israel is concerned, from a movement which, with all its radical verbiage, is basically anarchist and irrational in character and which has so far only spread ideological confusion. Israel was indeed built by the socialists of the Second and Third *Aliyot*. But their faith and idealism were, to put it mildly, rooted in a deeper tradition than the passing cultural (or anti-cultural) fashions which sustain present-day American radicalism. Even the Second and Third *Aliyot* had their periods of "great despair," and many immigrants did not stay in Palestine. The *halutzim* of 1905 and 1918 were rooted in a tradition infinitely more wholesome (to use an unfashionable term) than the *Kulturpessimismus,* the drug culture, the faddism, and the unthinking slogan-mongering of American radicalism. It is a painful subject, and I do not want to pursue it further on this occasion. But it should be obvious that, in view of their cultural and political background, present-day American radicals, with all their idealism, have to overcome great handicaps before they can help build a democratic and socialist society.

Israel has become a "normal" country with all the good and the bad things which this implies. It could well do with fresh democratic-socialist impulses. But here again a good deal of clear political thought and understanding is needed. The rediscovery of Ber Borokhov may be useful as a historical starting-point, as the beginning of a political education. The idea that Borokhovism can be applied to the situation of American Jewry in the 1970's is childish, though admittedly less harmful than some other currently fashionable irrational doctrines. However irrelevant to the present situation, Borokhovism may lead to a realistic, appraisal of the state of the Jewish people and of Israel in socialist and democratic terms. And so—hopefully—*od lo avda tikvatenu.*

But there is one prerequisite which, I fear, my correspondents have not even begun to understand: instead of a conformist copying of the style and an absorption of the content of fashionable lunacies, they will have to oppose them radically and without compromise.

ROBERT ALTER writes:

It is more than a little distressing to find such a morass of confusion and misrepresentation in a man who occupies so influential a position in Jewish life as Balfour Brickner. First, let me set the record straight on the allegation that COMMENTARY has just now converted to the affirmation of Jewish identity "after years of supercilious sneering at Judaism and Jewish life." From this most singular assertion, I must infer either that Rabbi Brickner is one of those poignantly vulnerable souls who never recovered from the trauma of reading Isaac Rosenfeld's "Adam and Eve on Delancey Street" in 1949, or that he simply has not been reading the magazine. To confine the discussion only to the eleven years of Norman Podhoretz's editorship, the two most frequent contributors on Jewish affairs have been Milton Himmelfarb and myself, and whatever our manifold faults, I think there are few who would accuse either of us of condescension toward Jewish matters. Other regular contributors on Jewish subjects during this period have been Gershom Scholem, Emil Fackenheim, Elie Wiesel, Marvin Fox, Arthur A. Cohen, Marshall Sklare, Lucy S. Dawidowicz, Arthur Hertzberg, David Daiches, Chaim Raphael. To impugn *any* of these writers with "supercilious sneering at Judaism and Jewish life" would be gross malicious distortion, so I shall give Rabbi Brickner the benefit of the doubt and assume he merely wrote without thinking.

On the general argument of my article, the tenor of *The Freedom Seder,* and the relation between Jewish tradition and politics, I am afraid that Rabbi Brickner is scarcely more accurate than he is on COMMENTARY's Jewish position. It is a little difficult to discuss politics with a man who thinks that radicalism can be adequately defined as the adoption of "new, different, and more activistic [*sic*] tactics." I can think of no significant group in this country that calls itself radical which would agree to this flat bromide of a definition, while the Jewish Defense League, in the vague terms of Rabbi Brickner's definition, would be the Jewish radical organization par excellence. This is more than momentary carelessness: it reflects the increasing habit among certain Establishment figures of clinging to the coat-tails and voguish terminology of protest movements without attending at all to the concrete political content of the terms and the movements. There are, after all, movements in this country that call themselves radical because they insist on a radical solution to our national ills—the overthrow of our present form of government and the abolition of the democratic system that has given us a minimal but precious safeguard against the tyrannies of absolutism. I am not suggesting that Rabbi Brickner or even Arthur Waskow is a member of this sort of extremist group, but I am distressed by their readiness to give an official stamp of Jewish approval to anyone who shakes a defiant fist at the Establishment and claims to be on the side of justice, whatever his real political aims.

Rabbi Brickner is so eager to be on the right side of the great moral struggle that he seems quite unaware of how transparently his own letter reveals his political irresponsibility. He is proud that Waskow's new ritual, enacted by thousands of students, "makes contemporary enslavement seem even more terrible and intolerable than it already is." There is an abyss of difference between making people aware of very real injustices and making them think things are worse than they really are. Is it a point of pride to encourage young people to see America as "Amerika," a fascist state which because it is fascist must be destroyed at any cost, by any means? I don't know whether Rabbi Brickner has had firebombs thrown into the building where he works, but I have, and as a result I do not take it lightly when I find people leading the young to think of university administrators as murderous pharaohs. There are, indeed, profoundly disturbing inequities in this society as it is now constituted, as many writers in these pages have made abundantly clear over the

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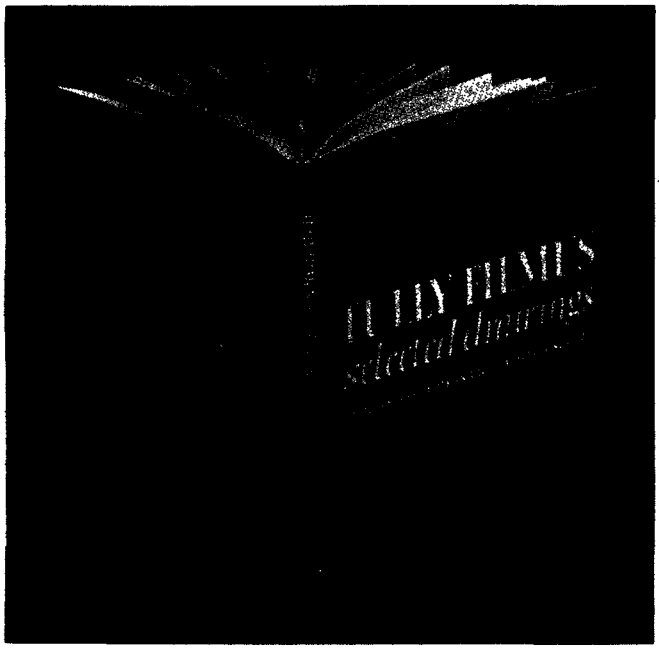

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years, but the invocation of "contemporary *enslavement*" is harmfully loose talk, little better than Waskow's promiscuous use of "genocide."

The imputation either to me or to this magazine of a narrow, self-serving ethnicity as the basis for Jewish particularism is again that of a writer who does not bother to read what he attacks. In my article, commenting on the new radical Zionists, I spoke approvingly of "a kind of particularism in which a people, through a proud sense of its own distinctive integrity, becomes aware of its implication in a larger human community." (If Rabbi Brickner is interested in a fuller statement of my views on universalism and particularism, since he seems unfamiliar with COMMENTARY, I would direct him to my debate with George Steiner on this question in the February and May issues of last year.) What I found most disquieting in Waskow's Haggadah was precisely its lack of a proud, self-affirming sense of the distinctive integrity of the Jewish people as a point of departure for its universalism. That proud sense could hardly be working in a document that confers the title of *shofet* on Eldridge Cleaver, prays to be next year in Egypt instead of Jerusalem, and has scarcely any place for the national liberation of the Jews in the world of real political events in our lifetime. Unlike Rabbi Brickner, I consider these features of *The Freedom Seder* to be more than incidental "excesses."

The question of criticism of Israel is a case in point. Surely neither the editors of this magazine nor I has ever suggested that Israel should be immune from criticism. As a model of responsible criticism, I recommend Alan Dershowitz's "Terrorism and Preventive Detention: The Case of Israel" [December 1970].* In my own case, the last article I wrote in these pages on Israel was "The Shalit Case" [July 1970], and that was not exactly a hymn of praise to the Zionist state. What is offensive about Waskow's kind of criticism is precisely its irresponsibility. I am willing to grant Rabbi Brickner that the Diaspora and Israel should "survive coequally," but Waskow makes it clear, in *The Freedom Seder* and elsewhere, that the partners are not equal: it is the Dias-

* See p. 33 for correspondence on this article.—ED.

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pora Jew, in this pretentious, self-congratulatory, and essentially false vision of Israel and the Diaspora, who has assumed the mantle of "prophetism," while Israel is imagined as whoring after the fleshly gods of American imperialism, and rebuked in vague, moralistic innuendos. (See, for example, the pseudo-prophetic comments on Moshe Dayan in *The Freedom Seder*, or Waskow's totally unsupported assertion elsewhere that Israel has become "the American Empire abroad.") Is it "slander" to point out these disturbing characteristics in a book offered for public ritual use, or is it an impugning of personal motives for me to note ("Waskow's serious theology, if he has any") that a writer, *on the basis of the textual evidence* of his own supposedly religious book, seems far more seriously engaged in a political cause than in theological matters?

Rabbi Brickner, I fear, is only a little less hesitant than Waskow to politicize the religious tradition. Judaism's ethical vision, to be sure, does have ultimately political implications, but it cannot be made so confidently the source of authority for a particular ideology or a particular form of social organization. We are all aware of Judaism's concern with justice, with making a better society, with the sanctity of human life. Whether that concern can be translated into "a specific societal direction" (whatever that may mean) is at least debatable. But to claim that we as Jews have a "heritage of *political activism*" (my italics) is using the impetus of contemporary issues to fly in the face of a great deal of Jewish history and codified Jewish tradition, and a people that lies to itself about its own past cannot have any real hope for the future.

Let me thank David Twersky and J. J. Goldberg for their kind words on my article and for correcting (together with Irma Weinstein) my error about the connection between the *Jewish Liberation Journal* and the Jewish Liberation Project. As for my comments on the statement of purpose of the Liberation Project, it is not, after all, so surprising that even radical Zionists should on occasion slip into the politics of preachment: manifestoes, by their nature, bring out the rhetorical excesses in all of us, and it was precisely my point that this particular rhetoric is at the moment terribly infectious and tends to interfere with clear think-

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ing about political issues. I am also happy to have Messrs. Twersky and Goldberg note the continuity between the old Left Zionist youth movements and the new radical Zionism, though I would add that many of the new radical Zionists —certainly here at Berkeley—are not formally associated with the established Zionist youth movements.

Irma Weinstein seems to me to take an unfortunate tack by following the current fashion of recasting all political discussion into statements for or against the "Establishment." I certainly did not write my article as a defense of the Jewish Establishment. Indeed, I have had harshly critical words to say more than once in these pages on the institutions of American-Jewish life (see, for example, "The Jewish Community and the Jewish Condition" in the February 1969 issue). And no one, of course, would deny the permanent relevance of the Prophets' passion for social justice. What I objected to was the appropriation of the theological gestures of those God-driven Prophets by basically secular political activists as a cachet for their own political views. It is so easy, and so gratifying, to think of oneself as Elijah and *les autres* as Ahab and Jezebel; but though the established Jewish community may have its Ahabs, it is not, collectively, Ahab, and the very invocation of such biblical tropes is an invitation to distort complex contemporary realities.

In my observations on *The Freedom Seder* I made a point of noting that Arthur Waskow himself was not explicitly anti-Zionist, and it is reassuring to learn from Art Green that Waskow has now come out in favor of Israeli national rights, though I think Rabbi Green will agree with me that one would not necessarily have predicted such a stance from the textual evidence of *The Freedom Seder*. In any case, I think both Art Green and Bill Novak are misguided in the concern they express for Arthur Waskow. Can the notion of "honestly attempting to come to grips with [one's] heritage, in his own particular way" give a stamp of approval even to someone who distorts the basic meanings of the heritage in his use of it? And what, precisely, is the radical Jewish "entity" Waskow is supposed to have helped create? Surely one of the matrices of the distinctive Jewish religious experience is a proud self-acceptance; but, as Itzhak Epstein observed before me, from Waskow's Haggadah one could hardly guess that Passover celebrates the national liberation of the Jews. *The Freedom Seder* is, of course, an offense to good taste, but, more serious, it is an offense to faith and Jewish historical experience. Those who know Arthur Waskow personally may find him well-meaning, but a Haggadah that can include statements of racial self-hatred (Marilyn Lowen's laments to her black brothers about being "bleached in this desert of exile") is a sick mockery of religious tradition and should be stigmatized as such.

It seems to me neither "vicious" nor an act of "vilification" but a responsibility to identify such a document for what it is, as I tried to do through a careful analysis of the text itself. I don't know, moreover, why Rabbi Green pretends that people who "relate" Jewish symbols to the young and hold Seders must necessarily be free of self-hatred. As a member of a traditionalist group like Havurat Shalom, he should certainly be sensitive, for example, to the element of assimilationist self-hatred in the classical Reform movement in Germany, which both held Seders and adopted certain selected Jewish symbols, following much the same strained universalist bias one finds in *The Freedom Seder*. Finally, Rabbi Green's more general charge of a "planned campaign of vilification against the emerging Jewish Left" hardly jibes with the last part of my own article, which applauds the new radical Zionists.

EARL RAAB writes:

I'm sure that Balfour Brickner and I have a disagreement, but it's hard to find in such a lush crop of straw men.

I certainly agree with him that: "a regressive society is bad for the Jews" (as is an "economically unstable" one, a "polarized" one, and one "in which Jews are either isolated or in self-isolation"); "the universalistic demand in Judaism is as compelling as the particular one"; these are not "times for Jews to concern themselves with Jewish things exclusively"; "there is no salvation in Jews copping out of America" (or in running into "Hobbit-holes"); "there is no salvation in vigilantism"; we cannot "withdraw from involvement in the struggle to make a civilization out of our jungle. . . ." And so on. Agreed. All agreed.

Perhaps Rabbi Brickner's almost exclusive reliance on slogans signals a belief on his part that protest and virtuous passion comprise a political program. Now that would be a disagreement. But I would find it embarrassing to suppose it necessary to repeat a primary lesson of modern Jewish history: that some of the most severe brutalization of man has taken place under prophetic banners. And I am loath to believe that Rabbi Brickner just wants to avoid anything that may blunt the political excitement of some young Jews. After all, he's properly ready to blunt the political excitement of increasing numbers of JDL youth. And, as Rabbi Brickner says, "candor is often more important than popularity."

No, I would prefer to believe that our disagreement flows from genuinely different readings of what's wrong with our society. Rabbi Brickner asks whether "the mentality of the JDL, the atmosphere of a Nixon-Agnew-Hoover regime [are] more hospitable" than those liberal directions which I pointed out were becoming inhospitable. I don't know why he's asking *me* that question, since I explicitly said "no" in the same article from which he quotes. But maybe it is because he still sees American politics only in terms of those traditional alternatives, and does not find it necessary or comfortable to assume a more radical stance to our social problems.

For example, I don't think we yet realize the extent to which this country in the 1960's made a new quantitative commitment to certain domestic human needs. Government expenditures for health and medical services quadrupled, public aid tripled (at the same time that the proportion of the comparatively poor was declining), and so on. But no one will argue that these programs made "a civilization out of our jungle." It's not just that they were insufficient, or that other events overtook them. Rather it is my perspective that these programs, while contributing to the general good, were at the same time uncivilizing forces in themselves because of the mode in which they operated. I don't think it would be difficult to elaborate this point. It's just an example of the fact that while social progress—in usual liberal terms—and the jungle certainly have some inverse relationship, it is not at all an automatic inverse relationship. I think a substantial segment of our young people has, somewhere, a better instinct

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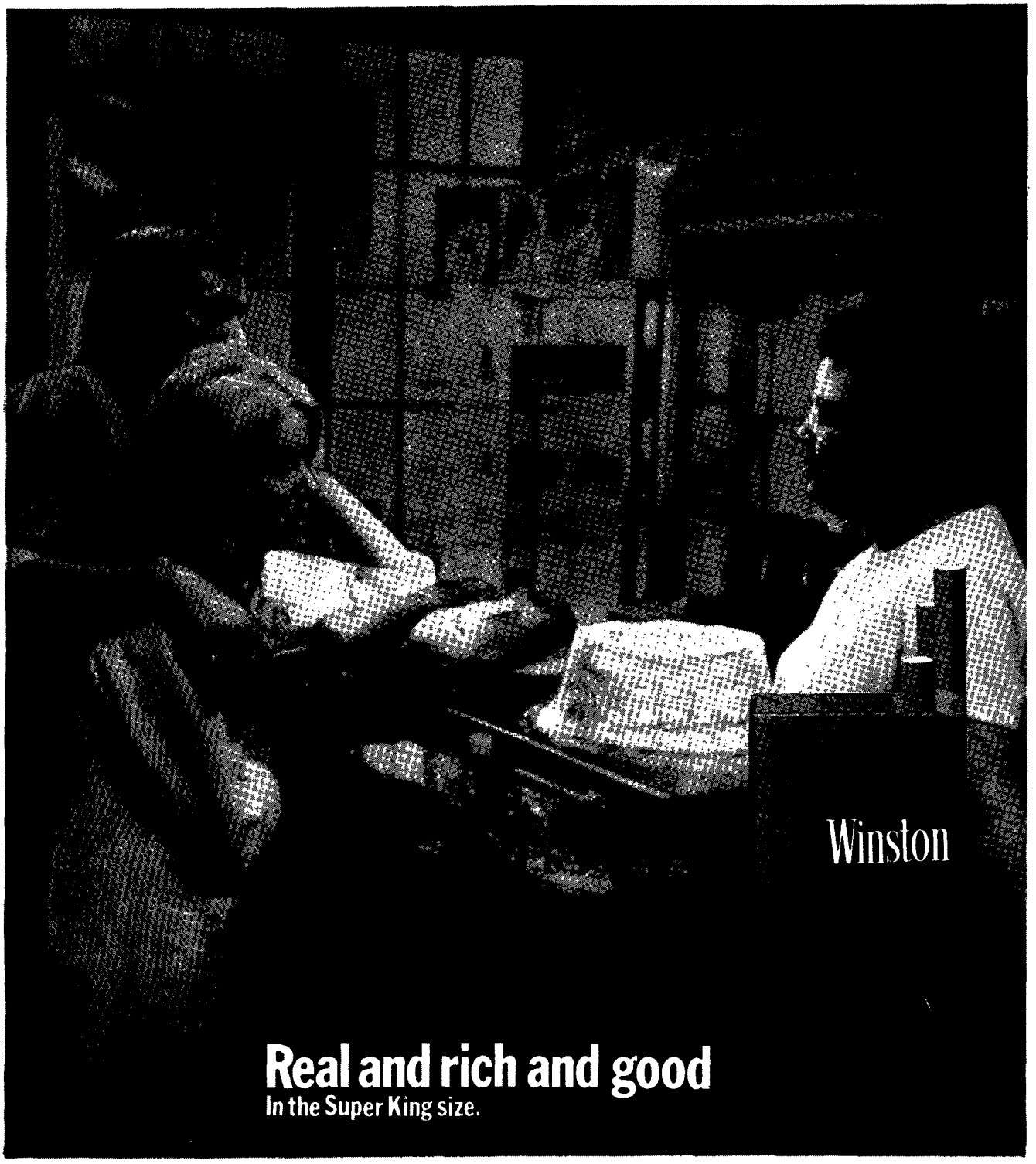

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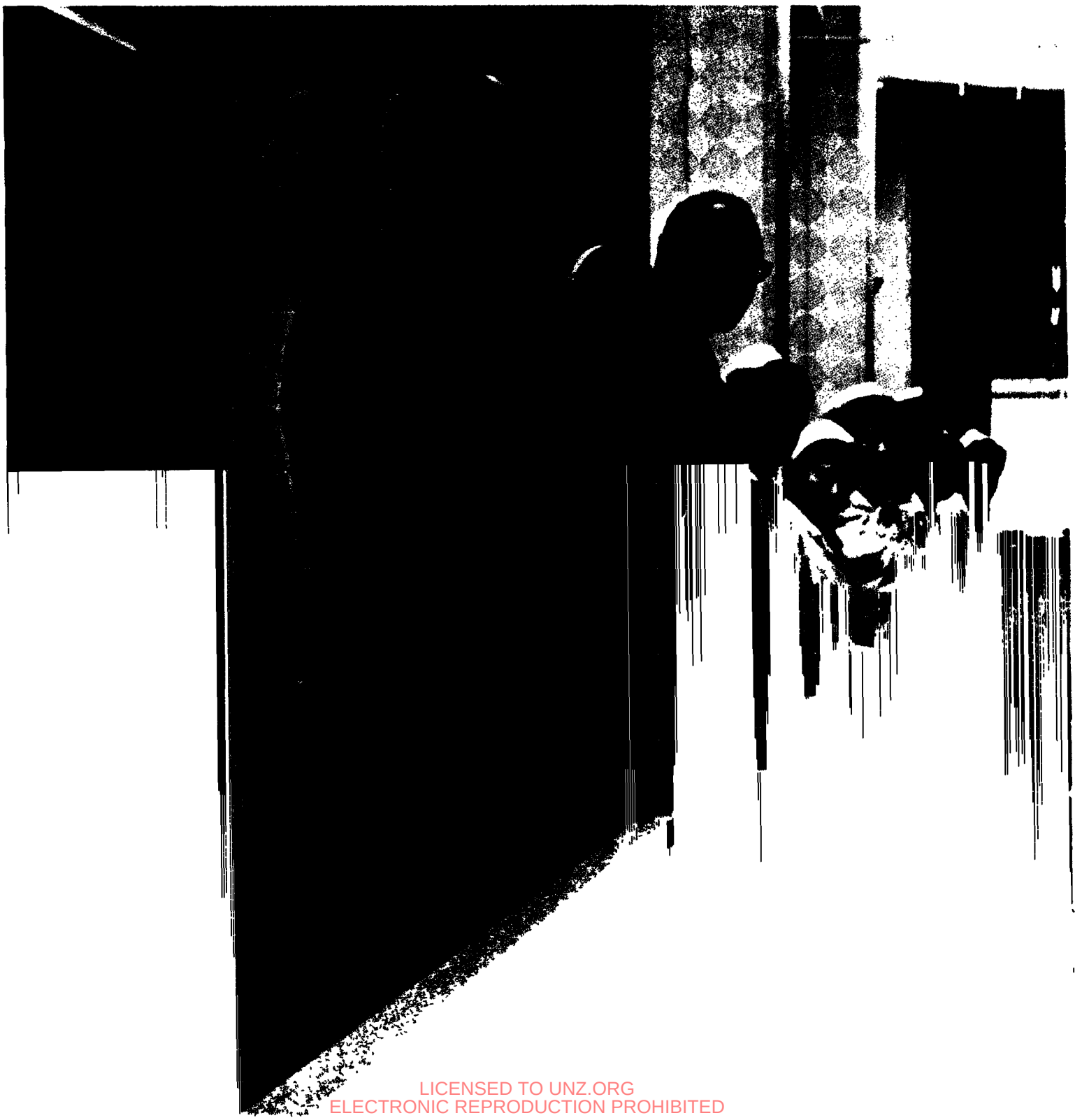

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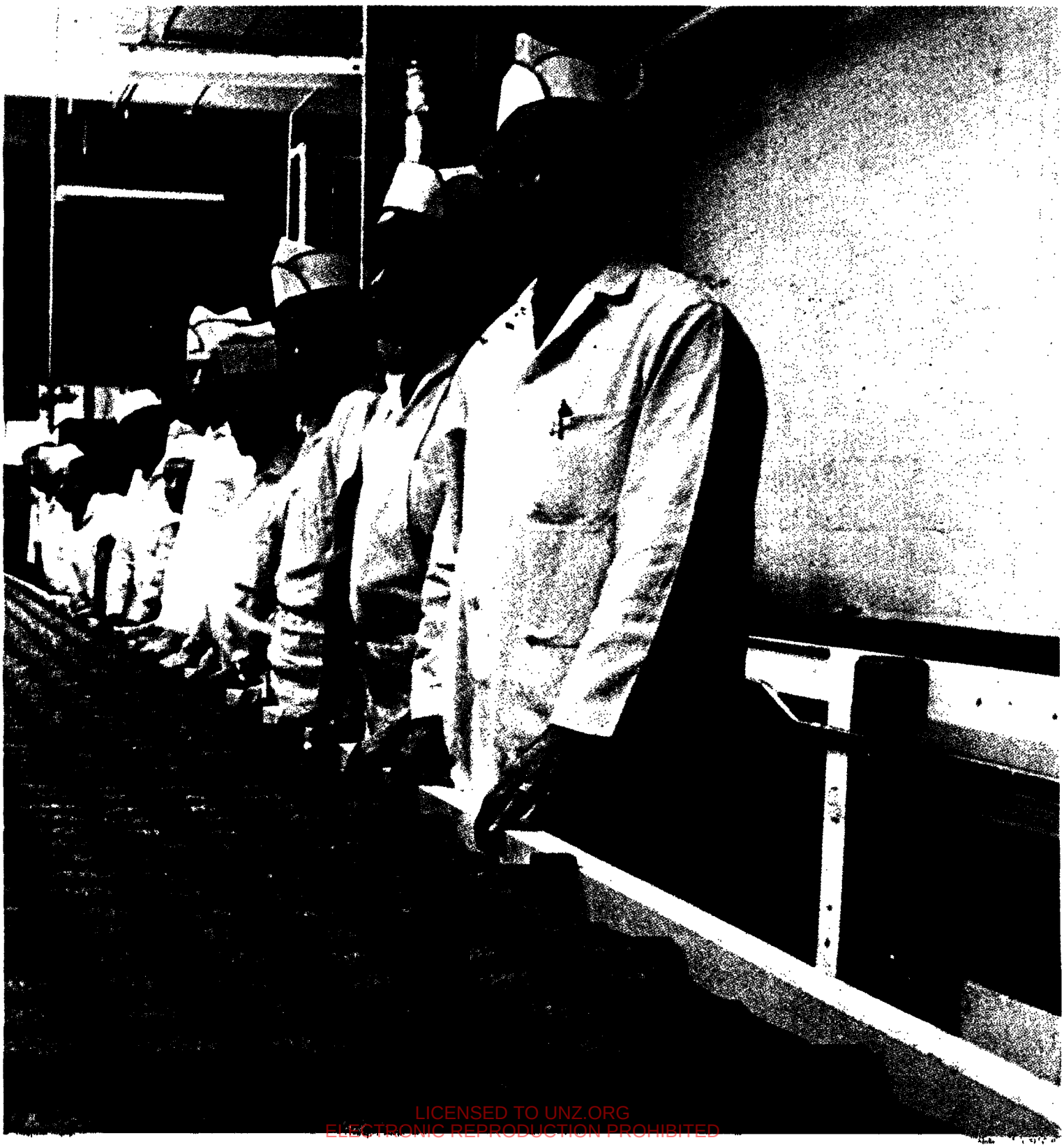

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for this volatile relationship than their aging fellow travelers. I also think that the Jews should have a historically-developed instinct for the jungle, even when it's camouflaged. This doesn't mean retreat from humanizing political activity. Quite the contrary. The self-fulfilling prophecy is to tell those Jews who smell the feral around them that they are therefore rednecks.

The Jewish community needs, among other things, a "national debate" on those conditions in America which will create and constitute a high quality of life. Our unique focus, our base of perception, is Jewish history and the commandment of Jewish survival. Those imperatives invite us to be particularly concerned, out of our particular experience, with the health of the universe around us; and instruct us to use as one indispensable measure of that health the sensitivity of that universe to our particular Jewish needs. When we find signs of that sensitivity slipping away, as we do, in our "own" political circles—traditionally liberal circles—then we serve neither the "universal" nor the "particular" by sticking our heads in the sand. There is a debate to be waged, and it should not be closed off by too many slogans, too much motivational analysis, orgies of mutual excommunication, or, as Rabbi Brickner himself puts it, by "cheap appeals to our emotion which titillate our sense of guilt. . . ."

NORMAN PODHORETZ writes:

Rabbi Gendler thinks my attack on *The Freedom Seder* was "shocking" in its "malice and personal abuse." Mr. Novak agrees. In his opinion my attack on Waskow was "unwarranted and rather vicious." Rabbi Goldburg for his part sees in my piece an "attempt to defame fellow Jews with whose viewpoint" I disagree. Rabbi Green too accuses me of engaging in "personal defamation" and charges me in addition with running "a planned campaign of vilification . . . against Arthur Waskow. . . ." Now before going on to more important matters, there are two points I would wish to make about all this pious outrage. First, it is tendentiously selective. Some months ago (before the February COMMENTARY appeared) Arthur Waskow wrote the following words in the magazine *Response* which is edited by the same Bill Novak whose sensibilities are so offended by the kind of language I used in attacking Waskow and to which Rabbis Gendler and Green are, I believe, frequent contributors: "Almost every one of the synagogues, the secular bodies like B'nai B'rith and the American Jewish Committee, *Commentary* [are guilty] of a whining authoritarianism, a bully-boy devotion to the American Empire like that of the worst Hellenizers to Antiochus . . . a snivelly admiration for Dayan, for jet-planes, for the Johnson or Nixon or Agnew who will deliver them."

Does a statement like this provoke the outrage of Waskow's rabbinical defenders, I wonder? If so, they have chosen to keep their indignation to themselves. And what of the letter from Rabbi Brickner printed above in which, for the sin of having attacked *The Freedom Seder,* I am accused of "cynical intellectual posturing" and of presiding over "something new and ugly under the sun," namely, "an intellectual, pseudo-Jewish McCarthyism"? McCarthyism, no less. Does Rabbi Gendler find such charges "shocking"? Does Mr. Novak find them "unwarranted and vicious"? Does Rabbi Goldburg see in them "an attempt to defame fellow Jews"? Does Rabbi Green consider them personally defamatory?

But if the outrage my critics express would appear to be selective, it is also a smoke-screen which serves to conceal the interesting fact that not one of them addresses himself to the specific criticisms I made of *The Freedom Seder* or tries to show that anything I said was either false in general or inaccurate in any detail. Rabbi Goldburg is under the impression that I said *The Freedom Seder* "creates" anti-Semitism. That is not what I said. What I said was that *The Freedom Seder* is "a contribution to the literature of Jewish anti-Semitism," and I went on to spell out precisely what I intended by that characterization: "By anti-Semitism I mean here, very simply, *against the Jews*: against their duty and their right to exist, to live and not to die, to look after themselves and their families, to make the best of their circumstances, to pursue their own interests, to defend themselves against all who wish for whatever reason to diminish or destroy them." As I myself acknowledged in "The Tribe of the Wicked Son," these are very harsh words. But are they untrue? Would Mr. Novak or Rabbis Gendler, Goldburg, and Green contend that *The Freedom Seder* supports the right or affirms the duty of Jews to pursue their own interests or to defend themselves against their enemies? If so, why are they all silent on this point?

Rabbi Brickner, to be sure, is not at all silent on this point. Neither is he silent on other points, but Robert Alter has generously relieved me of the need to answer his—shall we call it vicious and defamatory?—attack on COMMENTARY. I would also associate myself entirely with Mr. Alter's strictures against Rabbi Brickner's silly idea that Judaism has a "particular social thrust," and against the reductive irresponsibility with which he characterizes virtually every other complex reality he touches. As to the issue of universalism vs. particularism, it is in this context nothing more than a red herring. Whom does Rabbi Brickner imagine himself to be arguing with in his diatribe against "Jewish withdrawal from the larger society"? He is certainly not arguing with me or any contributor to COMMENTARY I can think of. Far from advising withdrawal into an "isolated particularism," some of us (especially Earl Raab and Nathan Glazer) have been urging Jews to understand that their interests are tied to the survival of a pluralistic democratic polity in the United States; we have been saying that the enemies of that polity, including those of Jewish birth, tend to be the enemies of Jewish interests as well, both here and abroad; and we have been advocating and trying personally to participate in a newly vigorous defense of liberal democratic values and a newly aggressive assault on all who contemn those values, whether they do so candidly or not.

This position has nothing whatever to do with theology (though there is plenty of warrant for it in Jewish tradition, if one wants to play *that* game), and it has even less to do with the universalism-particularism debate. It is exclusively concerned with the question of political strategies to insure Jewish security in the United States and abroad. Arthur Waskow argues that Jewish security can best be served by the recruitment of as many Jews as possible

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into the ranks of the "Revolution" as that hazy term is understood by the New Left or the Movement or the Counter-Culture or whatever one chooses to call this phenomenon. I on the contrary think that the worst enemies of the Jewish people, both here in the United States and in other parts of the world, including the Middle East, are today to be found on the revolutionist Left. Consequently I believe that anyone who counsels us to support the revolutionist Left is counseling us to support the enemies of the Jewish people.

Some who offer this counsel are no doubt misguided. Others are not in my opinion misguided at all. They are simply working for the Movement while pretending to be working for the Jews. If the interests of the Movement and those of the Jews happen not to conflict at a given moment or on a given issue, fine; if they do happen to conflict, it is the interests of the Movement which will be given priority and the interests of the Jews will be dismissed as illegitimate or reactionary or worse. All in the name of Jewish welfare, of course, or of loyalty to the principles of Jewish universalism. Now *that* pretense, Rabbi Brickner, is really "something new and ugly under the sun"—or at least under the American sun.

Rabbi Gendler asks what place an attack like the one I wrote on *The Freedom Seder* has in a magazine sponsored to "enlighten and clarify public opinion on problems of Jewish concern." I hope my answer to that question is by now obvious. The fact that so many Jews, and especially so many young Jews (10,000 at Cornell, according to Rabbi Brickner!), have been taken in by this abominable document is sufficient indication that public opinion is in desperate need of enlightenment and clarification on what I consider the single most important problem of Jewish concern—namely, how best to insure Jewish security against those who would destroy or diminish us and those who would apologize for the diminishers or collaborate with the destroyers.

Preventive Detention in Israel

To the Editor of Commentary:

I was astonished to read in Alan M. Dershowitz's article, "Terrorism and Preventive Detention: The Case of Israel" [December 1970], facts and views imputed to me which are untrue.

Let me first of all declare that I never was Fawzi El-Asmar's lawyer, as Mr. Dershowitz states in the article, and so I was not competent to discuss the matter of Fawzi's detention with Mr. Dershowitz, nor did I in fact discuss the issue with him.

In addition, my curriculum vitae as given by Mr. Dershowitz, including my views and motives, is false and utterly absurd.

I wish to remark also that there are many falsified facts and descriptions throughout the article but, of course, this is no consolation to me personally.

Felicia Langer

Jerusalem, Israel

To the Editor of Commentary:

. . . After I had been released from Damon Prison and placed under "restriction" in Lydda, I read Alan M. Dershowitz's article on "preventive detention" in Israel, which cites my case as an example. The article . . . is so filled with personal attacks on me and my family, and also contains so many deceptions and incorrect statements . . . that I have decided to reply, taking up specific points at issue.

1) *The lawyer*: It is a fact that Mrs. Josepha Kafri handled my defense—and *not* Mrs. Felicia Langer, as was stated in the article.

2) *The prison visit*: Mr. Dershowitz did indeed visit me in the Damon jail. . . . However, he did not come alone, nor did we have a private interview, as implied in the article. He was accompanied by the governor of the prison, a plainclothesman, and the prison social worker. In their presence, Mr. Dershowitz asked me some questions, of which he published only a partial account, omitting the most interesting parts. For example, he asked me what I, as an Israeli Arab, thought of the various Palestinian movements; he did not limit his questioning to Al Fatah, as he would have it appear in the article. I answered out of

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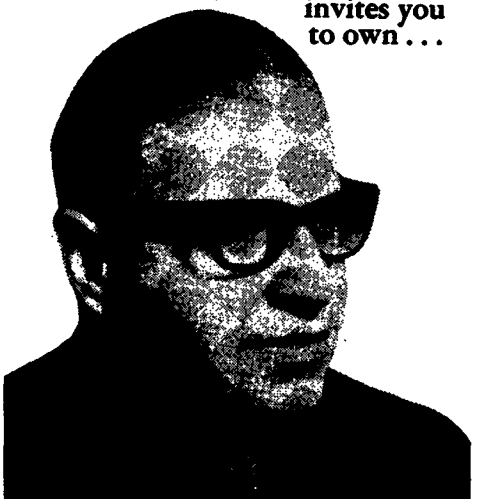

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my beliefs as a leftist, but he selected for publication only such parts of my answers as suited his purpose. I said what I thought, although there was good cause for being afraid. . . . The plainclothesman interrupted me often, and tried to influence my remarks.

3) *"Preventive" or "administrative" detention?*: The most obvious deception perpetrated by Mr. Dershowitz was his use of the subjective term "preventive" instead of the objective term "administrative." In so doing, he sought to make the irresponsible detention by the administrative authorities appear as a justified action. . . . He even took the liberty, in the translation of my poem that appears at the beginning of his article, of changing "administrative detention" into "preventive detention." When he asked me about prison conditions, I repeatedly told him that in many instances "administrative detainees" were treated worse than sentenced prisoners. The "administrative detainee," for example, is permitted only one visit a month, and only by members of his family. . . . A criminal prisoner, on the other hand, is allowed one visit every fortnight, and there is no restriction on who may come to see him. . . . The "administrative detainee," contrary to what Mr. Dershowitz says, is permitted to write only two letters and four postcards a month. Since his only hope is to bring his case to the attention of the public, the usual legal procedures being closed to him, this restriction is especially hard on him. There is also no good reason for forbidding the receipt of books, newspapers, food, and cigarettes. "Administrative detainees" were not sentenced by any court, and hence there is no justification for punishing them. Also, the "administrative detainee" is not allowed to work in prison and earn money for his family. There are "administrative detainees" who have nine and ten children! . . .

4) *The facts about me*: The gravest charges against me were made by the chief of Shin Bet—an agency described in the article as "Israel's small, but highly respected, counter-intelligence organization"—who, according to Mr. Dershowitz, showed him my personal file. I allow myself to doubt whether the charges quoted from this file were really in it and for the following reason: I was asked about a letter and that letter—of which a photocopy was shown to me during my questioning—was quite different in character from the letter Mr. Dershowitz describes, as I shall shortly explain. Since Mr. Dershowitz knows neither Arabic (the language of the letter) nor Hebrew (the language of the translation), I can assume that the Shin Bet man made up a letter that never existed.

I was shown a letter which was *not* addressed to me, but to a man in the conquered territories whom I don't know. Nor do I know the sender of the letter. In the letter there was a list of collaborators with the occupying power, messages about money being sent, etc., and at the end, the following sentence: "Please try to contact Fawzi El-Asmar, who lives near the railway station in Lydda (of the El-Ard people)." Since my name is known in the Arab world as a poet and writer, it is not surprising that an attempt to contact me should have been tried, but the man who carried this letter was caught by the authorities before he could contact me.

Regarding the man who was alleged to be in Jordan and to have heard about me as a "leader of a terrorist group" and who was introduced to me, I claim that he brought the information his senders told him to bring. I am sure that he lied and deceived his senders.

Another point: Two months after Mr. Dershowitz talked to me, I was freed. Although I am still restricted to the town of Lydda, why was I set free if I am really as dangerous as the article makes me out to be? I also think that readers will be interested to know that one week before my release a member of the secret police came to my prison with a completely new accusation. He said that he had information that the censored manuscript of my poems—let it be noted that Arab poems have to undergo censorship in Israel . . .—with all the corrections and omissions demanded by the censor, was in the hands of Syrian intelligence. The secret police were very surprised when I was able at once to show them the same manuscript—in the hands of my lawyer. Such is the work of Israel's secret police on some occasions.

5) *The facts about my family*: I should expect a man who holds a responsible judicial position, as does Meir Shamgar, Attorney General of Israel, to be correct in his facts. I should also have expected that he would never allow himself to broadcast baseless libels, in this instance regarding my parents and brother. To wit:

A) My mother was never a poet, as is claimed in the article, but a prose-writer. She wrote critical essays about the problems of Israeli Arabs and also about the relations of Israel with the Arab states. Until 1953 she published articles in the Arab daily newspaper belonging to . . . the Histadrut, *El-Jaum*. In 1954 she was elected to the World Peace Council. She did not write or publish anything after 1959. Since when is a legitimate criticism of land confiscation and of the expulsion of population considered an anti-Israeli act?

B) All the facts repeated by Mr. Dershowitz about my father are outright lies. The best proof is the fact that for thirty years, many of them under the Israeli government, my father was a civil servant. Had he ever been found guilty of "having made illegal contact with an Arab government" he would have been thrown out of his post immediately.

C) As for my brother, Ramzi, he emigrated from Israel and lived in Cyprus for four years. At his trial he was found guilty of having been in contact with a "foreign agent" (a very elastic term in Israeli law, as the trial of Aharon Cohen has shown) and *not* of spying, as Mr. Dershowitz writes. There is an essential difference here.

6) *Amos Kenan*: What Mr. Kenan said about me is his opinion. My opinion of him, I keep to myself. As for the facts: I have met Amos Kenan only casually, on two occasions, in a coffee bar. We talked on matters of no importance whatsoever. How can Amos Kenan claim even to know about my opinions since he cannot read Arabic and has never had a serious conversation with me? Since the short articles I have written in Hebrew are not sufficient for that purpose, I must assume that Mr. Kenan learned of my opinions from his own "intelligence agent." Mr. Dershowitz quotes him as saying: "In any event, I am an Israeli and therefore I have a special obligation to be critical of my government." I don't want to argue too much with my countrymen, but why

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does Mr. Kenan have the right to be critical of my government and not I? I am also an Israeli, and the government is mine, too—even if I oppose it and don't agree with it. Is criticism allowed to Jews and denied to Arabs?

7) *Further points*: I am very much surprised that Mr. Dershowitz was allowed to visit me in prison. Many others were refused. Two requests by Shalom Cohen, a member of the Knesset, were turned down. Uri Davis, a leader of the Israeli pacifists and vice chairman of the Israeli League for Human Rights, was also refused. Even my lawyer, Mrs. Josepha Kafri, was for a time refused permission to meet with me because —so the authorities claimed—she was also a personal friend who knew me prior to my arrest. . . . Why was Mr. Dershowitz the only one allowed not only to visit me but also to interview me? Was it because one could assume in advance what the nature of his report would be?

How did Mr. Dershowitz learn that Rakah [the Arab Communist party] wants to destroy the State of Israel? Rakah, which is a legally registered party, is explicitly on record as favoring the existence of the State of Israel. Rakah has three and not eight members in the Knesset. Moreover, it is a conservative pro-Soviet party and not one with "Maoist" tendencies, as Mr. Dershowitz states. . . .

I deny having said: "There is no one to talk to in Damon." On the contrary, I was in the company of the most intelligent and well-educated people from Eastern Jerusalem.

I deny having told Mr. Dershowitz that "[I] could probably be released whenever [I] chose to be, that various influential people had offered to intercede on [my] behalf." The only condition offered to me for release was that I leave the land of my ancestors forever.

I remain convinced that my detention was caused by my political position, and not for any other reason.

FAWZI EL-ASMAR

Lydda, Israel

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, I would like to comment on the matters raised by Alan Dershowitz states. . . .

To begin with, Mr. Dershowitz's . . . representation of Felicia Langer as Fawzi's lawyer is not only an outright lie but a vicious smear, since Mr. Dershowitz, the worthy successor of Senator Joe McCarthy, is careful to note that Mrs. Langer is a Communist, while Fawzi's real lawyer is not a Communist. Mr. Dershowitz also says that "in each instance where I could, I checked these often conflicting versions with third parties or documents." Then perhaps he can explain how he checked his most important case without contacting the lawyer at all? . . .

Now to pass to more general matters.

1) Mr. Dershowitz's favorable description of the living conditions in Damon Prison: At the time of Mr. Dershowitz's visit, and now too, hundreds of other prisoners were being held in preventive detention, under very different conditions. In fact, Damon is nothing but a showcase prison for visiting dignitaries. Why didn't Mr. Dershowitz visit the notorious jail of Shattah near Beit-Shan where Na'im el-Ash'hab has been held for twenty-eight months in preventive detention, and has been kept in solitary confinement for the last thirteen months? Why didn't he visit the preventive-detention prisoners held in Ramleh Prison under conditions much worse than those of condemned criminals? Why didn't Mr. Dershowitz investigate the custom of putting an Arab preventive detainee into a cell with Jewish criminals, who are encouraged by the prison authorities to beat him up, and sometimes to assault him homosexually? . . .

2) In spite of what Mr. Dershowitz claims, the main purpose of preventive detention is political and has no conceivable connection with any acts of terrorism. To cite just one example: before the last Israeli elections, about 1,200 Arabs were put into preventive detention for periods of four to six weeks and were freed immediately after the elections. . . .

Of course, preventive detention, sanctioned originally by the Emergency (Defense) Regulations of the now defunct British Mandatory Power, is not the only method of oppression which is used against the Arabs. The government can starve an Arab family by exiling the breadwinner so he cannot find work, or by doing the reverse and restricting him to his village, if most of the work is to be found outside it. Lawyers restricted to Nazareth, for example, cannot appear in courts which are situated in (Jewish) Upper Nazareth, and they have to request a special permit for each court session they wish to attend. . .

By such means the government has controlled the Arabs in peace and in war, but preventive detention has always been the chief weapon of oppression, and Mr. Dershowitz's claim that preventive detention was little employed before 1967 is simply false. It was always used extensively against Israeli Arabs, which proves its connection with party politics and its lack of connection with Israel's security.

3) Mr. Dershowitz claims that 99 per cent of Israel's 300,000 Arab citizens have no restrictions placed on them and that there is "no legal discrimination against them." Let me begin with the smallest thing: the price of tobacco. By government regulation all tobacco growers are required to sell their output to one monopolistic body, and the government sets the prices. The current price for 1 kilogram of tobacco of the usual quality depends on the nationality of the grower. An Arab gets 3.80 Israeli pounds, and a Jew gets 5.00 pounds for the same tobacco!

But more importantly, isn't Mr. Dershowitz aware of those areas and cities in which it is officially forbidden for a non-Jew to dwell or to open a business? Carmiel in Galilee (built on confiscated Arab land) is one such area . . . and I can mention many others: Upper Nazareth, Arad, Dimona. Doesn't Mr. Dershowitz know that almost all the land in Israel belongs to the Keren Kayemet (the Jewish National Fund), and in consequence, and by law, no Arab can buy, rent, dwell on it, or be permitted to work on it? Has he not heard about "Present-Absent" (*nifkadim-nokhehim*)? Under this maneuver, many Arabs "present" in Israel, even those with voting rights, have nevertheless been declared legally "absent," so that their lands, and their dwellings, could be confiscated and given to Jews. I shall cite but one example: the village of Um el-Fahem. This village was transferred to Israel by the Jordanian authorities in accordance with the Rhodes Agreement (April 3, 1949), in which Israel agreed to respect the freedom and the property of the inhabitants. The property was respected in the following

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way: the original 130,000 dunams of land now consist of 7,000 dunams, the poorest of the lot. The rest was confiscated and Kibbutz Tzur-Nathan now occupies much of this land. . . .

4) Mr. Dershowitz also maintains that Israeli Arabs "enjoy the full rights of citizenship." . . . Rakah is the only party or organization with Arab membership which is not under strict control of the government or the Zionist parties. . . . And even so, Arabs who join this party are relentlessly persecuted. . . . But the sin of the Arab who tries to form other, independent organizations is considered even heavier. . . . Independent Arab organizations have always been broken, and individual Arabs who have tried to join non-Zionist organizations like Matzpen have also been harassed.

5) Contrary to what Mr. Dershowitz says, the Israeli practice of preventive detention is much worse than the British one. . . . I most emphatically deny Mr. Dershowitz's contention that the "rules" he says he was given about the use of preventive detention (he admits that they are secret) describe the situation. Either he has faked the rules he describes . . . or somebody faked them for him. The advisory committee he refers to is chosen by the military authorities from among the most abject yes-men, . . . mere rubber stamps who almost automatically approve everything that is brought before them and who habitually disregard the gravest and best-founded accusations of beatings and tortures. . . .

Although I could cite many more examples of Mr. Dershowitz's hypocrisy, lack of knowledge, and even outright distortions, I shall end my rebuttal here. Mr. Dershowitz is not really important in himself, but unfortunately his attitude is typical of several American Jews I have encountered in Israel: their liberalism is, and always was, a fake. . . .

In closing, therefore, I should like to say to American Jews: You cannot continue in this way. You now have the same choice that was once given you on Mount Carmel: "How long will ye halt between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him, but if Baal, follow him" (Kings I, 18:21). And similarly now: If you believe in the same justice for Arabs that you demand for yourselves and for your brothers in the USSR, raise

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your voices and fight for the human rights of the Arabs in Israel in exactly the same way. If not, go and worship military force, bow low to Phantoms and tanks, accumulate money—and go to hell.

ISRAEL SHAHAK

Jerusalem, Israel

ALAN M. DERSHOWITZ writes:

When I began my research on preventive detention in Israel, I was advised—both by critics and supporters of the government—to speak with Felicia Langer. I was told that she was the lawyer for a majority of the detainees and that she was the most knowledgeable critic of the system. A number of the detainees at Damon Prison—including Fawzi El-Asmar—also urged me to speak to Mrs. Langer. Mr. El-Asmar referred to her as "our lawyer." Accordingly I arranged an interview in her home in Ramat Gan where we spoke for several hours. A considerable part of our conversation dealt with Fawzi's case, with which she was completely familiar. The name of Josepha Kafri never came up. The other "facts and views" which I attributed to Mrs. Langer also came out in this conversation and in another interview I had with her law partner, Ali Rafi, in their law office in Jerusalem.

I mentioned Mrs. Langer's membership in the Communist party (a fact of which she is most proud) in the context of criticizing the Israeli bar for not having a tradition, like our own, under which prominent Establishment lawyers are willing to defend people whose views they despise. I also mentioned it to show that Communist lawyers are permitted more freedom to practice their profession in Israel than in this country.

Fawzi El-Asmar claims that I was accompanied on my visit to Damon by a "plainclothesman." The person to whom he refers was a young law student named Moshe Gottesman who was my research assistant (selected by me, not the government). While at Damon I first interviewed Mr. El-Asmar alone; then we went into a room where I spoke to him and to the other detainees. The governor of the prison was not in the room while we talked; Gottesman was; and the lady social worker was there some of the time (she served as one of the translators for those detainees who could not speak English; the other translator—selected by the detainees—was Ibraham Gannaim, another Israeli-Arab detainee).

I have no personal knowledge of whether I was the only visitor allowed into the Damon detention center during Mr. El-Asmar's stay. Dr. Shahak's statement that "Damon is nothing but a showcase prison for visiting dignitaries," suggests a contrary view. In any event, no one in the Israeli government knew "in advance the result of [my] interviewing." Indeed, I left Damon very much impressed with Fawzi El-Asmar and his story. My inclination, at that point, was to write an article far more critical of Israel's detention policy than the one I ultimately produced. It was only after further research that I became convinced that Mr. El-Asmar and the others were being detained for their terroristic acts rather than their political views.

I simply do not understand what Mr. El-Asmar means when he says that my "most obvious deception" is the use of the term "preventive detention" instead of "administrative detention." I explicitly pointed out in my article that the "literal translation of the Hebrew term is administrative detention," and that the words "administrative" and "preventive" are used interchangeably when the subject is discussed in English. If anything, "preventive detention" probably sounds harsher to American readers than "administrative detention."

Mr. El-Asmar argues that his release after a year and a half is the best proof that he was never regarded as dangerous. But, as he well knows, it is part of the Israeli policy in administrating their detention law to free everyone—regardless of how dangerous—after a reasonable time. Indeed, I now have information indicating that many of the other detainees whom I saw at Damon have also been released; as of February 1971 the number of Israeli citizens in preventive detention was down to fifteen, as compared with twenty-three while I was conducting my research. (The number of preventive detainees from Jerusalem and the West Bank is down to 484, as compared with more than 1,000 when I was there.) Israel's rejection of long-term confinement reflects the kind of compromise between security and liberty that runs through the nation's entire approach to terrorism.

Mr. El-Asmar did tell me, despite his present denial, that a high official indicated a willingness to intercede in his behalf. My notes indicate that he specifically referred to the "Minister of Post." He also told me that intellectuals were not being detained and that most of his fellow detainees were simple people and illiterate. (Ibraham Gannaim estimated that there were twenty *"unalphabetim"*—illiterates—in the detention wing.)

I was mistaken about the number of Rakah members in the Knesset, but not—I believe—about its nature. Mr. El-Asmar's characterization of Rakah as "conservative" reveals more about him than it does about the party.

It is not surprising, of course, that Mr. El-Asmar is attempting to put the facts of his case in a light most favorable to his claim of innocence. It is always possible—though, in my view, highly unlikely—that he was, in fact, innocent of any wrongdoing. It is precisely this possibility—slim as I think it is in the cases studied—that led me to conclude my article by favoring repeal of the Emergency Defense Regulation, while recognizing the risks that this would entail.

Dr. Shahak faults me for focusing on the conditions in Damon (which he calls a "showcase prison"). Let me make it clear that I was given permission to visit any and all prisons in Israel and in the occupied territories; absolutely no restrictions were placed upon me. The reason I focused on Damon is that Damon is where virtually all the Israeli detainees are kept, and it was about them that I was writing. (Naim el-Ash'hab, who is in Shattah Prison, is not an Israeli citizen.) There is simply no truth to the "custom" Dr. Shahak describes—"putting an Arab detainee into a cell with Jewish criminals, who are encouraged by the prison authorities to beat him up, and sometimes to assault him homosexually." Detainees are kept separate from other prisoners. Indeed, the former have their own courtyard and dormitories. And none of them complained to me about treatment of the kind alleged by Dr. Shahak. Nor does Fawzi El-Asmar allege this kind of treatment in his letter.

Dr. Shahak's claim that preventive detention "has no conceivable connection with any acts of terrorism" is also based on misinformation. Even some of the detainees told me—bragged to me—that they were involved in terrorism. My notes reveal, for example, that Mohammed Hassan Diab, a thirty-

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five-year-old detainee, told me that he "enrolled to PLF" on November 16, 1969, and was sent on a mission to Nablus to "get explosives."

The men I saw at Damon were mostly illiterate and certainly not political prisoners in the usual sense of that term. Moreover, if "the main purpose of preventive detention is political," then why has the government not used it against its Jewish political opponents (of which there are many who are more vitriolic and politically dangerous than the Arab detainees)? The answer is that Jewish political opponents have not resorted to terrorism; and preventive detention—as practiced in Israel—is a technique for the control of bomb-throwing, not word-throwing.

Dr. Shahak claims that before the last election, 1,200 Arabs were detained for a number of weeks and freed immediately after election day. I checked on this rumor when I was in Israel and found it not to be true. There was some increase in the number of Arab-Israelis detained prior to the election, but there had also been a very considerable increase in terrorism at that time. The number of Israeli-Arabs detained at any given time has always borne a direct relationship to the incidence of terrorism and not to the vicissitudes of politics. Thus, the reason that the number of detainees is currently near an all-time low since the Six-Day War, reflects the low incidence of terrorism over the past eight months. Some Israeli-Arabs were subjected to preventive detention for a short time during the 1956 war, but Dr. Shahak's undocumented assertion that it was employed extensively during elections before 1967 is simply not true.

Dr. Shahak makes numerous allegations of economic and land-ownership discrimination against Arab citizens of Israel (a subject not covered in my article). Some of his allegations are simply false. For example, Arab families can and do live and work in some of the areas he mentions, such as Upper Nazareth and Dimona. Other of his allegations are misleading. For example, Jews and Arabs receive the same price from the government for tobacco, but the Jewish Agency pays a subsidy for tobacco grown by new immigrant villages. Some of Dr. Shahak's allegations do, however, contain a disturbing kernel of truth. Israel has not always treated its Arab citizens fairly with regard to land ownership and use. Concerned civil libertarians—Israeli, Arab, and American alike—should not shy away from fairly and candidly exposing injustices in these areas. But overstatement, distortion, and outright fabrication—of the kind engaged in by Dr. Shahak—do not contribute to the cause of justice.

Dr. Shahak's charge that there is no political freedom among independent Arab organizations is absurd. I have read various Arab newspapers and pamphlets—openly circulated in Israel and in the occupied territories—which criticize the Israeli government (and people) in the most extreme (and even vile) language. For every one of the fifteen Arab-Israelis detained in Damon, there are hundreds of vocal political organizers freely calling for Arab victory, the destruction of the Zionist state, and the expulsion of Jews from Palestine. I still maintain that no embattled country—including our own—has ever permitted so much political freedom in so dangerous a situation.

Dr. Shahak's undocumented assertion that "the Israeli practice of preventive detention is worse than the British one" is truly incredible. The British—in the interests of nothing more compelling than simple colonialism—detained many more people, on the basis of far less convincing evidence, for considerably longer periods of time, and at substantially greater distances from their homes. . . .

Dr. Shahak's accusation that I "faked" the administrative rules governing detention (or, more generously, that someone else "faked" them for me) is a most serious charge. I have in my possession a copy of the rules which were sent to me by the Judge Advocate General of the Israeli Army. That they are indeed the actual rules applied in detention cases was confirmed by numerous lawyers involved in such cases (including some vocal opponents of the government).

Dr. Shahak's description of the detention advisory committee as a group of "abject yes-men" and "mere rubber stamps . . ." is a gross overstatement. I personally wish—as I suggested in the article—that there were more probing judicial review of detention orders. However, my conversations with Supreme Court Justice Alfred Witkon, who sat on the advisory committee for many years, convince me that it is far from a mere rubber stamp. No one who knows Justice Witkon could possible consider him a "yes-man." He is a courageous, independent, and scrupulously fair judge.

One final word: In my article I tried to present a fair picture of how a democratic society faced with real danger from within and without has coped with the task of balancing the interests of liberty and security. I concluded by disagreeing with some of the measures adopted by Israel, but—at the same time—by recognizing that no country had ever preserved so much liberty while facing comparable dangers. Dr. Shahak writes as if there were no threat of terrorism—as if the explosions at Machane Yehuda and the Supersol were contrived by the government for the purpose of curtailing liberties. Some Israeli government officials, on the other hand, speak as if there were no restrictions on civil liberties. Neither view is correct. Civil liberties have, in fact, been curtailed in the face of a genuine threat of terrorism. And it is essential, in my view, that civil libertarians continue to advocate an expansion of freedoms even during these times of crisis. The tragedy is that shrill and intemperate voices—like that of Dr. Shahak—often drown out the voices of reasoned criticism.

To Be Sure

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

How about a moratorium on "to be sure"? I counted nine in the February issue. . . . George Orwell . . . said that a scrupulous writer will ask himself whether his text can be shortened, and whether he has said anything unavoidably ugly. To be sure fails on both counts.

BENJAMIN LEFKOWITZ
Palo Alto, California

Although, to be sure, nine tbs's are excessive for one issue, we feel that the phrase allows for a concession to other points of view without too noisy a screeching of rhetorical gears. To be sure, it also enables the writer to avoid that most egregious violation of good intellectual manners—explication of the obvious—while at the same time delicately signifying his awareness that some of his readers may perhaps be in need of just such explication.—ED.

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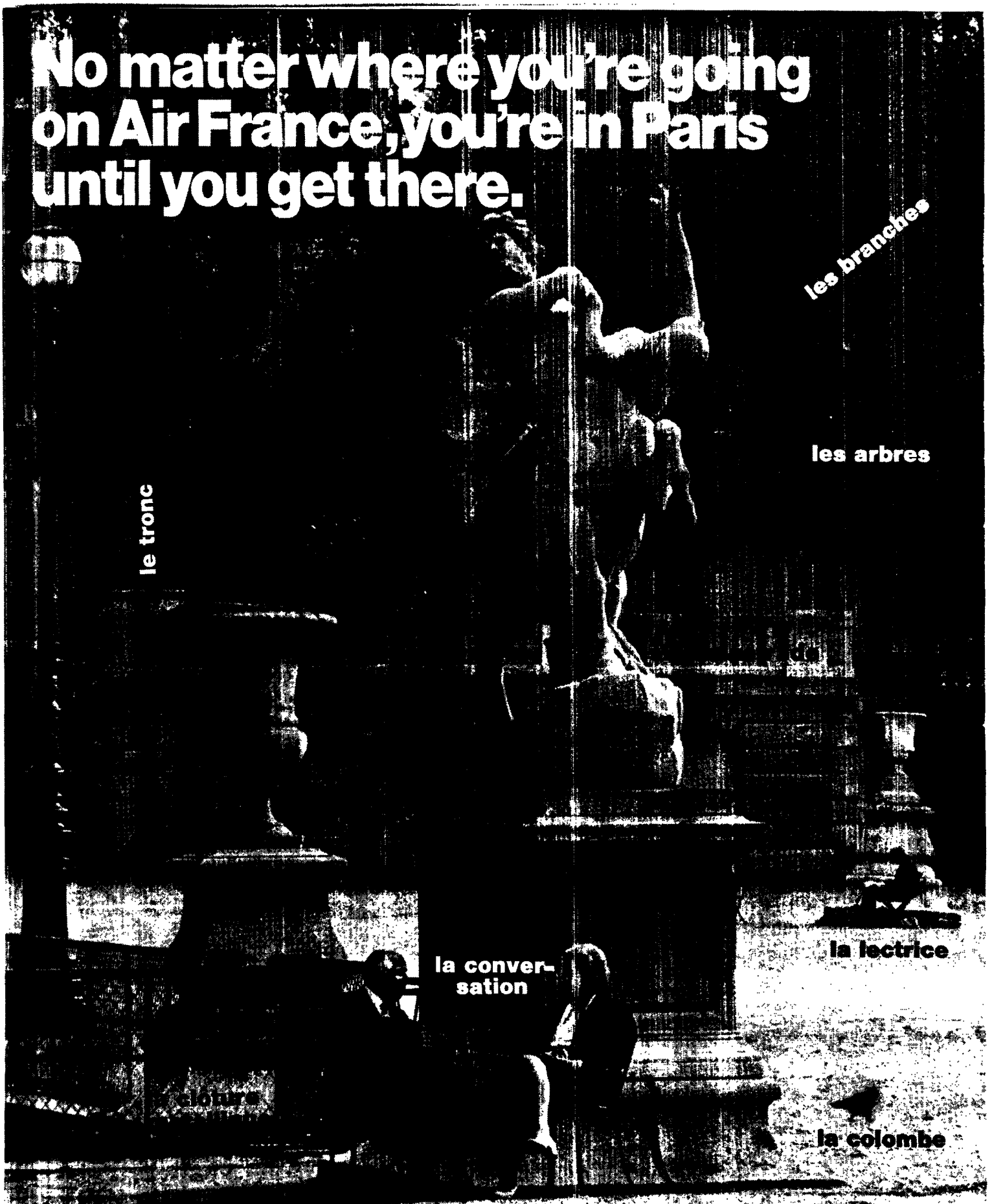

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The Drugs of Habit & the Drugs of Belief

Samuel McCracken

I

IF ANY man doubt the question of drugs* to be increasingly confused, even bizarre, let him recall that between January 9 and January 13, 1971 the Algiers pad of the Reverend Dr. Timothy Leary was the scene of a bust staged by the local office of the Black Panther party. Until the Reverend Dr. accomplishes his ancient dream of turning on the Supreme Court, the Algiers raid can stand as the symbol of the involution of the drug problem. Before matters get more involved, I am going to try to identify the principal issues in this most confused area in contemporary culture, issues largely missed in much of the current discussion.

It is fashionable, in pro-marijuana circles and even elsewhere, to treat the drug as no more than the young folks' martini. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. has made the case as clearly as anyone:

> . . . the contradictions of our society weigh so heavily on the young . . . between the accepted habits of one generation and the emerging habits of the next, as when a parent tipsy on his fourth martini begins a tirade against marijuana.

There are a number of vaguely moral contexts in which the argument has some value. No parental lover of the martini can consistently arraign the hedonism of an offspring enjoying marijuana; no parent dependent on the one drug can condemn as weak-fibered his offspring with a similar dependency on the other. Although it probably engenders a pleasant warm feeling about the centers of one's self-righteousness so candidly to compare the sins of the fathers and the sins of the sons, the candor is largely irrelevant to the substances themselves and the consequences of their use. If a parent spends his weekends racing at Watkins Glen, he can hardly condemn the speed-lust of his street-racing heir; but he will be no hypocrite in looking askance at the young man's sense of social responsibility. The parent who consciously swindles on his income tax is in a poor position to criticize his son's shoplifting. But the hypocrisy of the fathers is a feeble device with which to exculpate the sins of the sons. As long as the moral discussion proceeds at the level set by Schlesinger and many another, it never gets above yelling "You're another." This is not a very high level of morality, considering what a very moral age we inhabit.

Howsoever, there are admittedly some parallels of usage between marijuana and alcohol. Can they be extended to the substances themselves? Not very far, though some of the difficulties in doing so are to the credit of marijuana: it generally costs less, has no obvious hangover, seems with long-term use physiologically far less hostile. Whether this comparative benignity is more real than apparent is not quite a closed question, but for the present I will stipulate that a life with marijuana may well leave you healthier than one with alcohol. Further, the rationale for using marijuana is superficially more attractive. Alcohol is recognized by the least sophisticated as a depressant, its primary value to lower tension and inhibition. Despite the amount of drunken driving that goes on, it is very unlikely that anyone believes his reaction-time is improved by a few drinks. One accepts alcohol's degradation of certain performances only because it degrades others one would as soon see degraded. This is true primarily for the *use* of alcohol: in its abuse, the alcoholic's performance may be so degraded by withdrawal that the timely supply of alcohol may actually improve it. But for anyone without a severe dependency, the effect of the drug is to make him a little less complete; and he uses it because some of what he loses he can do without. The rationale for marijuana is in distinct contrast, for it is often alleged that the drug makes objective improvements in its users, specifically that it increases sensitivity, stimulates creativity, even improves understanding. I shall return to the validity of these claims, content for the present with observing that they indicate another area in which the alcohol/marijuana parallel is something less than exact.

There is yet another area of contrast, this to the credit of alcohol: secondary gratification. In

SAMUEL MCCRACKEN teaches literature and the humanities at Reed College in Oregon and is a contributing editor of *Change* magazine.

* I will use this word to describe any substance which alters state of mind, including alcohol and tobacco as well as such less spectacular substances as tea and coffee.

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common with all other drugs save alcohol, marijuana appears no more than a psychotropic. That is, of itself: there is a social dimension in its use, but in this, however different the style of conviviality, it is more or less analogous to alcohol. But the latter drug is additionally a nutrient, and often a delicious one, with the principal exceptions the two most common spirits. Advertisements rarely claim their gin is delicious, but make their pitch in such essentially nonassessable terms as dryness. Research indicates that a blindfolded taster will be hard put to know the gin of London or Peoria from that of Hood River, Oregon. The nicest thing a copywriter can say about vodka is that it has no taste at all. But these are sports, if popular ones. The price of a '55 Château Margaux, the existence of whole nations preferring wine to water, a riot of bourbon whiskies standardized in potency, all these suggest the presence in beverage alcohol of delights other than the psychoactive. I suppose that Professor Schlesinger's gin-sozzled hypocrites are pursuing mind-alteration nearly as single-mindedly as the marijuana smoker, but for most alcohol use, the pursuit of flavor establishes a distinctive context.

One last contrast may be a function of user attitude rather than substance used, but it is worth noting here. Alcohol users, unlike marijuana users, do not tend to become true believers. The latter in fact often describe themselves in drug terms as *heads*; one doubts that Professor Schlesinger's martinists think of themselves as *soaks*. This power of the substance to lead users into a self-definition so overtly in its own terms is quite remarkable, a power these drugs seem to share most notably with motorcycles.

THE contrast I have been developing between these two most common social drugs serves as the basis for perceiving a crucial duality. The two classes of drugs I call, with an accuracy symbolic if not literal, the drugs of the fathers and the drugs of the sons. Chemistry has been so productive of late that it is hard to give an exhaustive inventory of either class, and the one I supply here is necessarily provisional. It can be said for it that it does not omit any substance merely because it is widely used by those over thirty. The drugs of the fathers: coffee, tobacco, cola drinks,* alcohol, tranquilizers, and barbiturates. (Up-to-date lists of old folks' drugs often contain aspirin, but considering that it has no psychotropic action in the absence of pain, I conclude that it is a medicine, and exclude it.) The drugs of the sons: marijuana, the opiates (principally opium, morphine, and heroin), the stimulants (cocaine and the amphetamines), and the hallucinogens (principally peyote, mescaline, and LSD).

The two categories do not depend strictly upon the age of the users. The amphetamines are widely abused by the fathers, barbiturates by the sons. Colas and tobacco find favor with all ages. But on the whole the first grouping is in comparatively much better repute with the fathers, the second with the sons. The two groups are distinguished, finally, by differences in rationale. The most ever claimed seriously for the drugs of the fathers is that they restore the user to a condition at other times obtainable without the drug, by himself or others. Thus, one smokes cigarettes in an only partially successful attempt to gain a kind of tranquility enjoyed by non-smokers. The non-alcoholic drinks to become as calm as the man with fewer problems, as fluent or poised as the soberly fluent or poised. One uses tranquilizers for much the same reason, just as one takes sedatives to ape the non-insomniac. In each case, the aim is to restore the user to a somewhat less flawed specimen of the human condition.

It is entirely otherwise with the drugs of the sons. The effects of marijuana, comparatively mild as they may be, are not those one experiences without its intervention; the euphoria of the opiates is unexampled in real life; the stimulants jack up the metabolism to superhuman performance; the hallucinogens allow one to see what is not there. The claimed benefits put to shame the nicest things people say about alcohol:

O, Willie brew'd a peck o' maut,
And Rob and Allan cam to see.
Three blyther hearts that lee-lang night
Ye wad na found in Christendie.
We are na fou, we're nae that fou,
But just a drappie in our e'e!
The cock may craw, the day may daw,
And ay we'll taste the barley-bree!

The drugs of the fathers, then, promise to make you a little more human, the drugs of the sons a little more than human. The latter prospect may exhilarate until one recalls that the Greeks had a word for trying to be a little more than human, and also for what happened to men who tried. More ominous still are the contexts in which man is offered the chance to transcend the limitations of mortality. The religions which offer immortality may seem to offer that chance, but the transcendence, generally, occurs at the end of mortality, not during it. The chance to be transmortal now and pay later is usually offered from quite a different quarter. Eve, Jesus, and Dr. Faustus could tell you all about this sort of promise.

The implication is lurid, made only because it is at least metaphorically valid. I do not suggest an opposite provenance for the drugs of the fathers, which have their dangers, most too obvious to require detailed exposition. Tobacco—in the form of cigarettes—is quite the nastiest of the

* Less obviously psychotropic than in the good old days, when the *Coca* in the name of the best-known of these drinks still meant something; but still moderately so.

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lot, providing no benefits beyond feeding the dependency it creates. Alcohol, tranquilizers, and barbiturates create dependencies different from those of the opiates primarily in degree. Alcohol, considered solely in terms of its potential for creating a destructive dependency, is a graver menace than marijuana, which in these terms may be no menace at all.

But the implications of the new social drugs are more complex than those of the old. To explore them, we need to look more closely at the diverse characteristics of the drugs of the sons.

II

All drugs may be divided into two parts on a number of principles of partition. Shake up the drugs of the fathers and the drugs of the sons, and they fall into two new categories, the drugs of true belief and the drugs of habit. The drugs of true belief are those currently widely touted by the counter-culture, its atmosphere redolent with the heavy claim that marijuana and LSD are good for the consciousness, and they are to be found only among the drugs of the sons. But the drugs of habit are more widely spread: tobacco, alcohol, cola, methedrine, heroin. The degree of habituation ranges from the mild dependency of the coffee drinker to the classic addiction of the heroin user. These drugs are often promoted, but the promotion is not that of true belief, but of public relations, of advertising, of pushing. The explicit claims made for alcohol are relatively modest: that it will taste good, or at least not repellent; the implicit claims—that the right whiskey in the decanter will confer cachet among polo players and Amazon explorers, the right beer in the refrigerator, among the boys at the shop—these are far from the pseudo-rational touting now at work in favor of the consciousness-expanders. Cigarettes are the beneficiary of promotion—the claim that a given brand is for people too independent to be taken in by the snares of Madison Avenue, or that another will act as a restorative of primal innocence or confer feminine liberation—but these it is hard to believe any serious smoker takes seriously. The cigarette is a fix which comes in many flavors; any flavor becomes tolerable with use. Among the drugs of the sons, the drugs of habit themselves offer and deliver clear effects —euphoria and stimulation—and hardly need much press agentry. The user proceeds with the aid of psychological habituation or physical dependency, and the pusher needs to make his pitch only once. It may be noted of these drugs that they are in general seen—and accurately so—as either relatively harmless—coffee and cola—or relatively dangerous—tobacco, alcohol, heroin. From the Surgeon General to the WCTU to the underground press, the advice abounds, that cigarettes, alcohol, and heroin will mess up your health. I shall therefore have comparatively little to say about them, except as they are related to the drugs of true belief, for the drugs of habit are widely seen to be part of a Drug Problem.

It is otherwise with the drugs of true belief, now touted as being fun and as effecting a radical and desirable transformation of the consciousness. I will stipulate the first claim: on the evidence, marijuana is usually fun, and the hallucinogens often so. That marijuana is fun has been engagingly argued by Jack S. Margolis and Richard Clorfene in *A Child's Garden of Grass*,* a relaxed little work, by far my favorite piece of drug true belief, the profoundly sophomoric level of its humor notwithstanding. This is not necessarily a slam: perhaps they *are* sophomores, besides, some sophomores are pretty funny. Even so, much of the fun looks pretty nonpsychedelic. Monopoly, we are told, is fun, fun, fun when you're stoned. At the risk of baring more wellsprings of my consciousness than absolutely necessary, I can confess that I still find it hilarious, cold sober. Margolis and Clorfene provide the aspirant with a battery of parlor games, likewise in my undergraduate days hilarious, likewise cold sober. This sort of touting makes an offhand sort of claim that marijuana is an aid to adequate emotional response. Very well: if that is the only way to have one, marijuana may well be better than nothing. But anyone who uses it for such purposes ought to be aware of the implications of needing chemical aid before having adequate emotion. What would one think of a drinker who admitted using alcohol on such grounds? I would rate him as a very honest man with a very serious problem.

The claim can be reacted to a good deal more strongly: the most popular cant phrase for such drug use, "turning on," reveals at once a sharp contrast with alcohol, for which the equivalent metaphor is surely "turning off," and, more important, illuminates the nature of the fad. Those who, like myself, have always found "turning on" a repellent phrase, not quite knowing why, may wish to reflect on the implications of the metaphor: man not simply dehumanized, but converted to a mass-produced, standardized, electronic circuit, lifeless, without a power source; throw the switch, and click! on he goes. Those who find the metaphor attractive might also ponder it: that so appalling a vision is embraced by those elsewhere almost liturgical in their denunciations of dehumanizing technology shows with stark clarity the perverse essence of the drug apologia.

The claim of true believers that their wares improve the consciousness is a good deal more complicated. Again, I can make a stipulation: that under the influence there is an improved ability to fasten one's attention on the small and trivial, and

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that this can be enjoyable, even informative. What cannot be stipulated is the very different claim that perception remains heightened when the immediate influence has lifted. This sort of claim has been most recently retailed by Charles A. Reich in *The Greening of America:*

> The effect of psychedelic drugs does not end when the drug itself wears off; it is lasting in the sense that the user finds his awareness and sensitivity has increased, whether he is using drugs at the time or not. In other words, something has been learned,

echoing a student essay quoted by Richard H. Blum in *Drugs: Social and Cultural Observations:**

> Continued use of grass and hallucinogens increases this self-knowledge and can lead to an overall greater maturity . . . [the user] acquires a new sensitivity for the "realness" and "wonderfulness" of things. . . . He is also less dulled to other people and recognizes them as noble creatures no less real than himself. . . . Students see hallucinogenic drugs . . . as one elixir that may return sanity to the world. . . . This is the hope and the noble enterprise that is pursued by today's idealistic, sensitive, and curious youth.

Such claims, besides being disfigured by a self-esteem and self-righteousness nearly without example, are exceedingly impressionistic, as will be my attempt at evaluation.

CERTAINLY there is power in a substance which allows its user to see the ordinary as if it were extraordinary. But is it benign? Does someone who thinks Lehár is Mozart really experience Mozart? Surfeit is not necessarily benefit: as W. S. Gilbert remarked, although in another connection, "When everybody is somebody, then nobody is anybody." To confuse Lehár and Mozart is to lose the critical sense. One may decide the loss a fair tax to pay for the privilege of wallowing in experience, but the impost should not be a hidden one. These claims of increased sensitivity, greater personal understanding, facilitated interpersonal interaction, all involve delicate essences, as yet intractable—perhaps fortunately—to fiercely empirical study. But one can gather impressions. I pass my days in an academic community where the regular use of marijuana is high, perhaps as high as 50 per cent. In such an atmosphere, one should expect to see prodigies of sensitive awareness. My community is a wonderful place to be on any number of grounds, but that is not one of them. Among us, any crisis in governance or curriculum entails a large and angry public meeting, and on such occasions there is obvious a profound obtuseness about faculty motivations: the drug true believers are as content as any to judge those motivations in terms of fashionable political analysis, rather than sensitive and aware observation of noble creatures no less real than the observer. This obtuseness is perhaps no greater since the rise of the drug culture, but it is assuredly no smaller. At these meetings, largely inhabited by people with a common set of grievances, even sharing a certain revolutionary fervor, there is always a remarkable difficulty in securing intellectual or emotional agreement: speakers seem to misunderstand each other, to get involved in petty squabbles, at least as frequently as a straight population. And the failure of the psychedelic panacea is no less marked outside the mass meeting. There is a tolerance for litter even higher—incredibly—than in the outside world. (Just who litters is here, as elsewhere, never very clear. But the state of the student coffee shop and the mailroom floor suggest who it is that puts up with it.)

Since Charles Reich has identified sartorial matters as central to cultural analysis, I feel justified in noting that a look at much current campus fashion in the light of the history of costume indicates that marijuana either deadens aesthetic perception, or rotates it a full 180°. There is evidence for the former diagnosis in the extreme subtlety of rock music, for the latter in the canonical obscurantism of psychedelic poster art, where the game is to take a simple message and render it as illegibly as possible. One can descry the outlines of still more surprising reversals of perception: the fathers have long been seen to sin in empathizing more easily with one little girl at the bottom of a well than with the myriad victims of war; the sons have learned to empathize with the war victims, but are developing a curiously barbaric attitude toward local sufferers. The campus is visited by armed robbers and rapists, persons unknown who steal everything not nailed down; all these are welcome visitors if the alternative is the presence of the police, for a single cop on the beat is seen as a threat to marijuana. The new barbarism, whether embodied in statute or in the opinions of a minority, suggests that the new generation, including the marijuana users, is if anything brutalized in ways the old one was not. Or the sensitivity bestowed by marijuana is a very special one.

The claim of true believers that their drugs stimulate artistic invention goes back at least to the venerable chestnut about Coleridge, opium, and "Kubla Khan." The sober facts, however, turn out to be of little use to the tout: the poet's two accounts of the episode disagree on whether opium was involved at all; the version which says that it was sets the composition during a post-opium reverie, likely enough considering the ease with which the person from Porlock broke in; J. L. Lowes, in *The Road to Xanadu,* demon-

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strated the extent to which the stuff of the vision was Coleridge's reading; and finally, it is hardly common belief that "Kubla Khan" is a better poem, even a more imaginative one, than those produced by an unstoned Coleridge.

As for contemporary supporting evidence: I am still waiting for some. What with the current rampage of amateurism, doubtless many aspiring artificers are taking their dictation from a chemical muse, their effusions containing one-tenth of one per cent cannabis, an inspirative. But the result has not exactly been a latter-day Renaissance. The explicit products of an expanded consciousness are almost invariably precious and unbelievably trivial. At least so they seem to the sober onlooker: I cannot discount the possibility that, like holograms, they can be perceived only by the same light in which they are created. But if such works are caviar to the sober, they would seem to be—as far as concerns natural humanity—irrelevant. Implicit in the whole notion of drug-generated art is the nasty assumption that man is not good enough. The assumption would be appropriate in the thinking of one of these pro-death liberal academics we hear so much about, but it sounds a bit strange amidst the affirmations of humanity so fashionable among the pro-life humanists.

The most extravagant claim for the drugs of the true believer is that they make him transcendently wise. I shall return to the implications of such a claim, and of its acceptance. For the moment, consider two variants of a classic folk tale, instructive in themselves, and posing pretty problems of *Quellenforschung* and textual criticism.

> [A] There is no such thing as a profound revelation while stoned. . . . The definitive story of false profundity concerns a well-known writer who, one evening while stoned (on something other than grass—but the principal [*sic*] is the same) was struck by a revelation of universal truth. He was overwhelmed by its significance and managed to bring himself back to reality long enough to scramble to his writing desk and, frantically scribble his new-found wisdom on a scratch pad. The next morning our hero awoke, remembered that he had had some kind of a vision, and leaped out of bed to read what he had written. He picked up the piece of paper and read: "There's a funny smell in the room."*

> [B] Many years ago Oliver Wendell Holmes, a famous American physician and jurist [*sic*], wrote down the inspiration that had come to him while under the influence of ether: "The veil of eternity was lifted. The one great truth, that which underlies all human experience, and is the key to all mysteries that philosophy has sought in vain to solve, flashed upon me in a sudden revelation. Henceforth all was clear: a few words had lifted my intelligence to the level of the knowledge of the cherubim. As my natural condition returned, I remembered my resolution [*sic*] and staggered to my desk. I wrote, in ill-shaped, straggling characters, the all-embracing truth still glimmering in my consciousness. The words were these (children may smile; the wise will ponder): 'A strong smell of turpentine prevails throughout.' "†

[A] is almost certainly a debased popular-ballad variant of [B] behind which in turn—witness the telling conflation of Holmes *père* and Holmes *fils*—lies a lost original. The scholarly of turn will find riches here, the wise will ponder the simple wisdom of the folk.

Considering the popularity of marijuana and the hallucinogens it would be odd if they did not turn out to have some attractions, puffed up by true belief into a surprising gospel of better life through technology. But no, it is not so surprising. It is, after all, the land of advertising, and were it not that, it is yet a land of humans, vulnerable as Baudelaire to the temptations of godhead:

> None should now be astonished by the final, the supreme thought born in the dreamer's mind—"I have become God!" That ardent, savage cry bursts from his lips with so intense an energy, with so tremendous a power of projection, that if the will and belief of an intoxicated man had effective virtue, the cry would topple the very angels scattered along the roads to heaven: "I am a God!"

But this is a squalid godhead, gimcrack and ultimately quite phony. The country is sufficiently charged with such already, without adding the sordid doctrine of ersatz divinity. That the counter-culture's critique of real phoniness should be tied to a phony reality is a neat embodiment of what I take to be the central theme of *The Birds*: not only can't you escape Athens by going to Cloudcuckooland, you can't even escape being an Athenian. In the drug culture, as anywhere else, the utopian itch is fraught with the very meanness it so bravely sets out to correct.

III

So much of what has been said about the dangers of the drugs of true belief has been ignorant and demagogic that one hesitates to say more on the topic: one of the most serious obstacles to intelligent analysis of the drug question as a whole has been the insistent ascription to marijuana of dangers it patently does not possess, notably in the etymological myth linking hashish and the sect of the Assassins. To a lesser degree, attempts to implicate marijuana and LSD in such sensational outcomes as genetic and brain damage have diverted attention from other questions. If we lay aside the

* Cited in *A Child's Garden of Grass*.

† Quoted in *Drugs and Youth: Medical, Psychiatric and Legal Facts*, by Robert Coles, Joseph H. Brenner, and Dermot Meagher, Liveright, 272 pp., $2.45. A superb introduction to the problem.

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question of how these drugs affect the gross circuitry of the brain, there remains the question of how they affect the workings of intellect itself. Our experience with alcohol—now of some duration—suggests that one may use it in copious moderation for a lifetime and remain intellectually active and efficient. To put it somewhat differently, although alcohol in moderation is certainly hostile to the intellect, in moderation the hostility appears to be limited to the period when it is physiologically present. The martini is never a ticket for a return trip, but the drugs of true belief are more generous. Robert Coles estimates that perhaps 20 per cent of those who have taken LSD three or more times experience flashbacks, returns of hallucination in the absence of the drug. A smaller proportion experience psychotic episodes, even after what have appeared to be good initial experiences. As Coles says, the evidence is still murky: "One is left in the dark. One is also left to worry, seriously worry about anyone who takes LSD."

While it has become fashionable to claim that psychotic episodes following LSD use occur only in the "pre-psychotic," Coles is rightly dubious as to the value and meaning of such a concept, and points out that it is not of much consolation to an ex-pre-psychotic—made *ex* by LSD— who might otherwise have made it to age ninety-five still pre-psychotic, a condition operationally otherwise the same as non-psychotic. Some people, after all, manage to attain old age grossly overweight.

But these are comparatively rare, comparatively obvious outcomes. There is evidence for the existence of subtler consequences, less easily observed but no less troubling. Coles cites a chilling little tale of some young scientists who experimented with LSD as an aid to abstract thinking. The trips were groovy, but

> for seven or eight months afterward, each subject discovered his ability to think creatively at a high level of abstraction and to design complex research experiments was significantly impaired. The scientists were quite able to carry on formal teaching functions and were able to go on about their work without alarming or worrying their colleagues in any way. Still, almost a full year went by before *they* felt they were absolutely back to normal—and they were men *favorably* disposed toward LSD when they took it.

The anecdote is a straw in the wind; one of my scientific colleagues believes it to be supported by his own observations of drugs and scientists. When I look about me, I form impressions—admittedly not often much more than impressions—of similar phenomena. The effect is most marked in students embarked on an ambitious program of consciousness expansion: their intellectual behavior suggests very strongly that the consciousness is of finite mass, thinning as it expands. The case of the superior student who falls apart in such circumstances is regrettably familiar. And I think I can see less marked effects in those whom I know to have taken up more or less regular use of marijuana.* The observation may seem no more verifiable than the drug user's claim of expanded consciousness; the difference is that others may attempt to verify my claim without themselves running the risk of being evidence. Finally, for what it is worth: two of my under-thirty colleagues, both fairly involved in the drug culture as undergraduates, are quite convinced that they suffered very minor but so far permanent intellectual dulling as a result of earlier experimentation. Less dulling, perhaps, than any honest drinker recognizes the morning after; but unlike the effects of the morning after, still evident the day after that, and after. The commonplace that marijuana produces no hangover seems to be true in the familiar physiological sense. If there is a subtler and more enduring hangover, the possibility would outweigh the value of many happy hours at stoned Monopoly. At least, so Norman Mailer appears to believe:

> Now, however, that he had again an actively working brain only partially hampered by old bouts of drugs (which revealed their ravages in occasional gaps like the absolutely necessary word for an occasion failing utterly to arrive on time . . .) yes, Mailer was bitter about drugs. If he still took a toke of marijuana from time to time for Auld Lang Syne, or in recognition of the probability that good sex had to be awfully good before it was better than on pot, yes, still! Mailer was not in approval of any drug, he was virtually conservative about it, having demanded of his eighteen-year-old daughter, a Freshman now at Barnard, that she not take marijuana, and never LSD, until she had completed her education, a mean promise to extract in these apocalyptic times.

If there are such consequences, they will presumably eventually be understood as subtly physiological in operation. But there is a more purely intellectual consequence entailed in the use of drugs of true belief, one presenting—after alcohol abuse and opiate-stimulant use—what seems to me the gravest part of the drug problem, a societal dimension not to be handled simply by the individual's sensible use of marijuana, i.e., by considering it fun but not theomimetic.

Considering how often, and sometimes on what dubious grounds ours is said to be a sick society,

* Two studies of adolescent marijuana users recently published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* would seem to provide some confirmation of these observations. As reported in the New York *Times*, April 19, 1971, Drs. Harold Kolansky and William T. Moore found that "'normal' youngsters can suffer serious psychological disturbances following regular smoking of marijuana, without the use of other drugs" while Dr. Arthur Kornhaber concluded from his work with teen-agers that marijuana may be "toxic to the human nervous system during growth and development."

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I hesitate to iterate the diagnosis, but there really is something pathological about a situation in which humanity is seen as something attainable only with chemical intervention. Such a view is disturbing enough in Professor Schlesinger's martini heads, presumably trying to get over a day at the office, still more so in the student who needs to be stoned before he can relate to his fellow beings. The former dependency is perhaps less perverse in being quasi-medicinal, but neither is very pretty, no prettier than a dependency on cigarettes, tranquilizers, or sedatives. In this context, there is not a great deal to choose between the sons and the fathers.

But there is another, final consideration. The most extreme claim made for the drugs of true belief is that they rip the veil from reality. Aldous Huxley, rapt by mescaline, put the case with terrible clarity:

> This is how one ought to see, how things really are.

The terrifying non-sequitur is, I take it, the sort of thing Charles Reich is talking about when he says that drugs allow one to make connections not otherwise made.

If these positions can be defended, it cannot be in any intellectual contexts, which require for their very existence a certain simpleminded set of working assumptions: that there is a reality out there, that we can perceive it, that no matter how difficult the perception, the reality is finally an external fact. One might, I suppose, imagine that the perceptions of the sober perennially distort the reality, and that the drugs of true belief are no more than corrective lenses. It would then be reasonable to expect that the lenses showed a reality common to all. From my reports, they do not appear to do so: if they are lenses, they are whimsically computed and ground. If the notion of an infinite number of realities is no more mind-boggling than an infinite number of universes, to accept it is to render superfluous any further reasoned discussion on any topic whatever.

Martin Buber, responding to Huxley's account of his experience under mescaline, identified the problem here, setting Huxley's confusion of how one ought to see and how things are against a fragment of Heraclitus:

> The waking have one world in common, whereas each sleeper turns away to a private world of his own.

As Buber implies, we can barely imagine an age when this was not a truism; I am not sure that we are not entering an age when it will cease to be seen as one. Buber's indictment of the mind capable of giving assent to Huxley's rapturous cry from his sleep makes quite clear what is at stake:

> Since he is not willing to answer for the genuineness of his existence, he flees either into the general collective which takes from him his responsibility or into the attitude of a self who has to account to no one but himself and finds the great general indulgence in the security of being identical with the Self of being. Even if this attitude is turned into a deepened contemplation of existing being, it remains a flight from the leaping fire.
>
> The clearest mark of this kind of man is that he cannot really listen to the voice of another; in all his hearing, as in all his seeing, he mixes observation. The other is not the man over against him whose claim stands over against his own in equal right; the other is only his subject. But he who existentially knows no Thou will never succeed in knowing a We.

Resisting the temptation indulgently to cudgel the counter-culture in detail, I shall just note that it is informed by the sort of consciousness Buber is talking about, with the most deplorable consequences. The master irrationality of a realer-than-real reality expedites all the little madnesses, the many facets of the fad for Knowing the Unknowable. As long as a preference for the mad over the sane resided primarily in street fakirs and Blavatskyites, academics and other rational beings could look on and giggle. Now that the preference has begun to filter into locales nominally academic, it has become a matter for concern. If it captures the imagination of a generation, it will become a matter almost for hysteria.

IV

HYSTERIA is not the reaction I would recommend, although—in the sense of a spasm of the reason—it has been a typical one on both sides of the drug question.

The hysteria within the drug culture is a largely sporadic phenomenon, related to a kind of paranoia about entertaining the feeblest challenge to its rights and rationales, manifest in intellectual spasms entailing the acceptance of the most extraordinary contradictions.

In the first place: the friends of drugs are as likely as the enemies to be also friends of the environment. Consider the eco-existential dilemma of the environmental head: he may seek "natural" vitamin A at the hips of the rose; given the choice, he is not likely to prefer natural morning-glory seeds to synthetic LSD. How wonderfully ironic to be so aware of what happens to streams of water when others introduce strange chemicals therein, so complacent about the streams of one's own blood. The paradigmatic figure here is Charles Reich, wanting each bit of reality to be "natural," preferring reality as a whole to be ersatz. One could listen without an internal shriek to all those sermonettes about how the Indians knew how to live with nature, rather than against it if the homilist were willing

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to live in similar amity with human nature and reality.

Consistency would make similar exactions of enthusiasts for pop Eastern religion. Among contemporary gurus, the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and J. Krishnamurti have—like reasonable mystics—taken a dim view of drugs. The latter is especially high just now with educational innovators, who might look at the arguments of his commentator, Chaman Nahal, to the conclusion that drugs and mystical vision are antithetical.*

And finally, an obtuse little myth entirely symptomatic of the intellectual paralysis of the drug culture: the true believers commonly argue that when their opponents do not act out of ignorance and demagoguery, they act out of puritanism. And having conceded that drugs can be fun, I must concede that those who are opposed to fun will be—if they are consistent—opposed to drugs. Yes, Virginia, the opposition to drugs contains a measure of puritanism. But it is not an embarrassing concession: that Macaulay's Puritans forbade bear-baiting on account of pleasure in the spectators need not keep us from forbidding it on account of pain in the bear. From my own experience and acquaintance, it appears to be entirely possible to wallow in sensuality while entertaining the gravest objections to the drug culture.

The hysteria of drug opposition has centered on the question of control. Although the problems inhering in the question of access to drugs are among the most complex of the whole subject, controversialists have often taken them as among the simplest. To begin with what really is a comparatively simple issue: the laws currently governing marijuana, which are clearly inequitable and ferocious. In any number of jurisdictions, smoking a marijuana cigarette is a more serious crime than the lesser degrees of homicide; the most elementary requirements of equity dictate that marijuana use be scaled against more patently anti-social behavior and the codes revised accordingly. The inequities relating to marijuana are, of course, but a sample of what is wrong with our patchwork criminal code, and could we agree that marijuana use should be a crime, and of what degree, establishing just penalties would still require a total overhaul of the laws. To favor such revision of the marijuana statutes is not in itself to accept the fashionable argument that the present laws make criminals out of millions of children. What makes a criminal is the violation of statute by an individual. The real difficulty with the present law is its rating as a serious violation an act which may be morally neutral, and is certainly morally fairly inoffensive.

Now, to consider the general question of legalization, we need first to establish a distinction not always made: between desirability of access and the means taken to control access. If, for example, it were clear that no one should have access to heroin—as I presume it is—the next task would be to find—as we have not—effective and institutionally acceptable ways of denying the access, understanding that the search might fail on either criterion.

It might, for example, be argued that we ought to treat the possession of drugs much as we now treat the possession of books: as a private matter until such time—remote in the case of books—as events prove otherwise. Such a criterion would presumably inform us that even though the heroin addict today is almost certainly doomed to an anti-social existence, this is the case solely because of a price structure enforced by the Harrison Act. This argument becomes more complicated if one imagines an entire population on heroin, a population likely to be as incapable of forming a society as a population entirely taken over by Consciousness III. But to annihilate society has at least a single benefit: the annihilation of societal problems; such problems would be self-liquidating. To take a somewhat less dystopian example, it is by no means certain that if, say, a quarter of society began the regular use of LSD, the portion on bad trips at any one time would not begin to be a societal problem. To return to reality, the present degree of access to alcohol permits it to produce a vast social problem, and it may well be that a wider access to drugs would simply add to it.

Even so, to treat the use of drugs as a matter to be regulated only in a public context would be to assign drugs a privileged status. The use of penicillin is certainly a private matter, yet the law forbids its supply except by prescription and takes a dim view of those who bootleg it. And the same is true for the majority of all medicines: it is a little unfair, but not very, to say that the law now allows unlimited access only to ineffective medicines. To make currently illicit drugs as available as penicillin would be to impose considerable constraint upon the supply; were marijuana to be made available by medical prescription *and in no other way*, the decline in its use would be precipitous. Society, in fact, establishes broad categories of substance and artifact, legal in that they are available to some users at one time, illegal in that they are unavailable to others at other times. Unless one is to claim that all drugs are harmless, to argue that all should be universally available is to reject in principle all the machinery by which society restricts access to such diverse items as arsenic, cigarettes, rum, firearms, automobiles, insulin, and nuclear weapons. If one is to argue for free access to harmless drugs only, that is at most to argue for free access to marijuana only; the harmfulness of everything

* *Drugs and the Other Self*, Perennial Library, 240 pp., $1.25. A very useful collection, especially of 19th-century hashish memorists, and worth the price just for R.C. Zaehner's magnificent account of a mescaline trip.

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else has been abundantly demonstrated. The critical issue in legalization becomes then the format of control.

As I have suggested, legalization in a medical format would not be likely to satisfy most drug users. Indeed, morphine is available legally in such a format now, and some users appear to find the legal arrangements for its supply unduly restrictive. To lesser degrees there will be difficulties in adopting any of the other formats of control now in use. Margolis and Clorfene say that marijuana "should be made legal subject to the same or similar regulations which now apply to the use, distribution, and sale of alcohol and tobacco." What would such legalization involve? Alcohol and tobacco, they might have noted, are not covered by the same regulations at all. Were marijuana to be made legally equivalent to alcohol, in most states it would be legally forbidden—with various degrees of enforcement—to a considerable proportion of its present clientele. In many jurisdictions it would be fairly risky to supply it to the underage. Its distribution and sale would additionally be subject to a great deal of troublesome and often bizarre control. In the comparatively sane state of Oregon, to cite a couple of regulations which might be adapted for the control of legalized marijuana, wine with less than 14 per cent alcohol is sold in grocery stores until the early morning, seven days a week. Wine with a higher percentage of alcohol is a state monopoly, available at limited times and places. The solitary beer drinker may not be sold his tipple from a pitcher, but must buy by the glass or bottle. Barring the possibility of a federal constitutional amendment regulating these matters, marijuana would doubtless be legalized, as was alcohol, in a crazy quilt of laws filled with such lunacies, all assented to by legislative heads as concessions to legislative straights. There is nothing very reassuring, in this connection, in the prospect of nineteen-year-olds from an access-at-twenty-one state driving home after an evening in an access-at-eighteen state.

Were marijuana made equal to tobacco, an age restriction, though doubtless less effectively enforced, would render it at least formally unavailable to many of its best friends. And assuming that it were to be distributed by the cigarette companies, or their equivalent, we should expect it to be pushed with great vigor. We have no reason to assume, for example, that they would be shy about trying to turn on the underage. We should expect, in fact, that until the revolution at least, the marijuana industry would have all the clout now possessed by the cigarette industry. There is something a little unsettling in the picture of that much power in the hands of an industry explicitly dedicated to driving the country a little mad, and something a good deal more unsettling in the industry being successful. We simply have no evidence of what it would be like in a society which spent much time getting spaced-out. What evidence I have from communities where such is the condition for a large minority is not, *pace* Charles A. Reich, vastly attractive.

There are, to be sure, predictable advantages to legalization. Alienation on the campus might be alleviated, although the effect of rising expectations might dampen such benefits. Marijuana now serves as a kind of loss leader for pushers hopeful of getting customers for more dangerous substances; this would cease under legalization. On campus, there is now a certain umbrella effect, in that marijuana users tend to see any move against heroin as a threat to their own drug, and react accordingly. It might become easier to control the traffic in the more dangerous drugs if the marijuana consumers no longer had a vested interest in its protection. And finally, no one can believe that youthful marijuana users who end up in jail benefit by the experience.

Thus, while no pattern of legalization likely to be passed in the foreseeable future will satisfy the drug apologists, it might well seem that the eventual benefits of repeal argue decisively for its adoption. So it might seem, were it not for one hidden consideration. The danger would be very great that to legalize marijuana would be to put a societal stamp of acceptance on the arguments now being widely advanced for the drugs of true belief. These are not simply erroneous, but explicitly irrational. Whether such an adoption of madness as a national policy would have consequences outweighing any possible benefits I am myself far from certain. But I am quite certain that the issue must be canvassed, and I am equally certain that it has not been.

These doubts about legalization are not necessarily doubts about repealing the present penalties against marijuana use. Were it not for the example of Prohibition, it would be tempting to fancy a scheme whereby the use of marijuana became at most a sociological question, and maximum effort concentrated on the traffic itself. But nothing in the history of sumptuary legislation suggests that the prospect is a very hopeful one; and as long as the drugs of true belief continue to acquire more true believers, nothing is likely to change.

INDEED, I can offer no coherent plan for dealing with the problem of access. For those who remain convinced that marijuana ought to be legalized, Joel Fort makes a thoughtful and informed proposal in his recent book, *The Pleasure Seekers.** In my own view,

* Grove, 254 pp., $1.25. A detailed and often eloquent exposition of the young-folks'-martini theory, marred by a good deal of youth cultism, but perhaps only superficially so. Particularly full accounts of the effects of various drugs and relentless correction of anti-drug hysteria make it an important book despite these flaws.

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we are dealing with an attitudinal Pandora's box, quite possibly one attached to the tail of a tiger. Tentatively, I suggest that if there is anything to do, it lies in the area of drug education. Not, of course, as that term is generally used, that is as indoctrination more or less inaccurate, almost entirely concerned with the drugs of the sons, often so hysterically wrongheaded about the drugs of true belief as to vitiate better-informed treatments of the drugs of habit. The principal home of the drug culture today is the campus, in some real sense just the locale where it is ultimately the most dangerous. And it seems to me that the reaction of college faculties and administrations to this phenomenon has been—hysteria being rightly understood as being sometimes paralytic in its effects—quite the most hysterical of reactions. At some campuses of my acquaintance, the reaction is something worse than legalization: the adoption of eloquent statements about what a very grave view the institution takes of drug use, backed up by a massive show of impotence. In such a context, the statements are seen by students as produced for external consumption, to mollify trustees, parents, police. The apparent message for the intramural audience is quite different: we don't care whether you use drugs or not.

Inasmuch as I believe the assumptions of the drug culture, the assumptions which collegiate drug users buy at least in part, to be lethal to an intellectual community, I venture to suggest that academics who do not accept those assumptions have a very considerable stake in challenging them. Very little drug education of the more respectable sort goes on at most institutions, possibly because he who expresses his doubts is likely to be seen as at best a Puritan. In an ambience in which reward is increasingly attainable by pandering to the basest instincts of the young, there may not seem to be much mileage in assaulting the drug culture, and, indeed, there may not seem to be any reason for making such an assault. But there is. Although it appears true that marijuana and LSD do not, in any gross sense, lead to heroin, the assumptive requirements for the former are very similar to the assumptive requirements for the latter. Additionally, I am utterly convinced that as long as marijuana remains illegal, there is simply no way to root out the drugs of habit—the dangerous ones—while tolerating the drugs of true belief, for the users of the latter, while disagreeing with the means of the users of the former, agree with their ends, and will do all they can to support them. While it would be a dreadful prospect finally to come to terms with heroin on campus—I am myself not sure whether I could remain in an academy which had done so—that would be as nothing compared with coming to terms with marijuana and the hallucinogens.

For that accommodation would be the academic equivalent of the compact with hell. No academy which made such a compact would survive very long. The larger society would not escape the consequences of its dissolution: maimed as it is, the academic world remains the last large-scale refuge of reason, freedom, of humane values. It would be entirely in keeping with the Adversary's reputation for astuteness were he to succeed in leading that refuge to acquiesce in the destruction of the belief in what is common to all, without which it is as nothing.

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Doing History

J. H. Hexter

SOME YEARS AGO, Ved Mehta wrote for the *New Yorker* magazine a series of articles on the practice of history. They were based on the views expressed to Mr. Mehta by several eminent British historians, and reported with what accuracy who knows. Bearing the curious title, "The Flight of the Crook-Taloned Birds," the articles seemed to demonstrate, among other things:

1) that perhaps some English historians are unduly addicted to behaving in a fashion associated with a place on the other side of St. George's Channel called Donnybrook;

2) that English historians must be intrinsically more interesting than American historians, since the latter achieve notoriety only through the occupancy or pursuit of public office while the former seem to stumble into it just by being themselves;

3) that oral communication to an innocent-seeming Indian may not be the ideal means of formulating one's views on history for dissemination to a wider public.

What follows is an attempt to clean up only a small corner of the area that Mr. Mehta's broad brush so generously spattered. At one point he dealt with the views of E. H. Carr, expressed in a book called *What Is History?* The title implies a modesty not wholly characteristic of the work itself, which with greater accuracy might have been entitled *What History Is.* As Mr. Mehta puts it, "In his book, Carr unhesitatingly held on to his belief . . . that all history is relative to the historians who write it, and all historians are relative to their historical and social background." "Quoting Mr. Carr ('Before you study the history, study the historian. . . .Before you study the historian, study his historical and social environment.'), history was not objective (possessing a hard core of facts) but subjective (possessing a hard core of interpretation). Each generation reinterpreted history to suit itself. . . ." So much for Mr. Mehta. Let us add another posy to the bouquet of Carr quotations. When "we take up a work of history our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it."

The one-time shepherd of all historians in the United States, Dr. Boyd Shafer, former executive secretary of the American Historical Association and editor of the *American Historical Review,* instructed his flock that Mr. Carr's *What Is History?* was "the best recent book in English on the nature of historical study." We historians then were practically bound by pastoral injunction to browse in the intellectual meadow that Mr. Carr had so generously provided us. Already, perhaps, the reader may have inferred that I am in something less than perfect sympathy not only with the judgment of Dr. Shafer but with the statements of Mr. Carr, and with the point of view which they enfold. In this he would be correct.

Mr. Carr has formulated that point in another way. You cannot "fully understand or appreciate the work of the historian, unless you have first grasped the standpoint from which he himself approached it." Thus he says, in order fully to understand his *History of Rome,* one must know about Theodore Mommsen's disillusionment with the liberal revolution of 1848. Fully to understand his *England under Queen Anne* one must know that George Macaulay Trevelyan was "the last of the great liberal historians of the Whig tradition"; fully to understand his *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III,* one must know that Lewis Namier was a continental conservative.* At this point in Mr. Carr's disquisition, I ground to an abrupt halt. It suddenly struck me that there were two early Namierites, and that by a wild coincidence they were among the historians whom I had known best and longest.

The first is Robert Walcott, whom I have known for thirty-five years; the second is myself, whom I have known for a bit longer. Professor Walcott is a Namierite by choice; and I had watched with awe the incipient Namierization of the Parliaments of the early 18th century from close in, when we occupied neighboring stalls in

J. H. HEXTER, a new contributor, is professor of history at Yale and the author of, most recently, *The History Primer* (Basic Books). The present essay will be included in a collection of Mr. Hexter's essays, to be published under the same title in the fall by Indiana University Press.

* E. H. Carr, *What Is History?* (Knopf, 1965), pp. 24-48.

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Widener Library. I am a Namierite by grace of a reviewer for the *Economist* who years ago graciously admitted me to "the nuclear club whose first member was Sir Lewis Namier."

Since we were both charter members of the Harvard chapter of the Teachers' Union back in the 30's, I take it that during his early Namierizing days, Professor Walcott was not a conservative. And, born in Cambridge, Massachusetts, he is a continental only in the 18th-century American, not in the British sense of the word. As for myself, I was once a member of the grievance committee of the then Red-infested New York college chapter of that same Teachers' Union, and of four academic colleagues who were invited to my wedding, three subsequently took the Fifth Amendment in the course of loyalty investigations. And I am not a continental either. I am a Cincinnatian. Now if to understand Professor Namier's history it is important to know that he was a continental conservative, to understand our writing is it equally important to know that Professor Walcott and I, two early Namierites, were *not* continental conservatives—or even just conservatives? If Namier's attitude toward society is the first thing that readers of his work need to know, what effect did my *ignorance* of his attitude have on me back in the 30's when, scarcely conscious of the fact, I became a Namierite?

And this brings us to another puzzle. Why should Professor Namier's politics strike Mr. Carr, no Namierite, as important, and me, a Namierite, as unimportant? The difference lies in the questions Mr. Carr and I are interested in finding answers to. Mr. Carr wants to know why Namier wrote a book like *The Structure of Politics at the Accession of George III*. For people with a taste for this sort of guessing game, amateur seat-of-the-pants psychologizing is less a vice than an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of raising the problem in the first place. I know this because I have had a try at the game myself in connection with Thomas More's *Utopia*. My early questions about *The Structure of Politics* were of a character very different from Mr. Carr's. They were as follows:

1) What that is new does the book say about English politics in the middle of the 18th century?

2) Has it got the story right?

3) Can I make any use of the way *The Structure of Politics* was put together in the kind of work I am doing?

Suppose I had put those questions to Mr. Carr, and he had replied, "When you take up *The Structure of Politics*, your first concern is to know that Lewis Namier was a continental conservative." I fear my reply would have been, "I can hardly conceive a less relevant answer to my questions."

Mr. Carr has stated his purpose in another way. It is "to show how closely the work of the historian mirrors the society in which he works." Now, if by the society in which he works, Mr. Carr means the vast tumultuous event-matrix of all human happenings during his lifetime, then like everybody else the historian mirrors it badly, because only a very small part of it can ever be in any one man's range of perception. The sector of human happenings a man is likely to mirror best is the one he is involved in most, the society or societies, the associations of men, in which he indeed lives and works.

II

We need not embark on an arduous and uncertain quest for the society historians work in. With great wisdom and perceptiveness it has been identified for us by the federal government; and annually the Internal Revenue Service reminds us of the facts of life. Crushed and bleeding from the embrace of the Iron Maiden, Form 1040, we seek among the cancelled checks for some surcease from pain, and we find: dues, American Historical Association; dues, Organization of American Historians; dues, Economic History Society; dues, Renaissance Society—deductible. Expenses: meeting of Midwest Conference on British Historical Studies—deductible. Subscription, *Journal of Modern History*—deductible; subscription, *History and Theory*—deductible. Depreciation of library, almost all history books—deductible. Share of utilities for space used in the house for writing history—deductible. The United States government then has not a moment's doubt about what society I work in. It says that I work in the society of professional historians. And as a neighbor of mine used to remark, "What's good enough for Uncle Sam is good enough for me."

An inordinate amount of what has been said about historians and the history they write has gotten into stultifying tangles because no heed has been paid to the fact that preeminently the society which professional historians are members of, belong to, work in, is the society of professional historians. Nearly all the competent history writing done nowadays is done by professional historians, people who are trained in and live by the regular practice of history as lawyers live by the practice of law, physicians by the practice of medicine. In these matters the very first line historians, like other professionals, draw is the one that separates the particular community of professionals from the rest of the world who with respect to law or medicine or history are laymen. Yet in face of the massive professionalization of the writing of history, most people who have meditated publicly on the way history gets written have not seen fit to make any analysis, much less to make a serious investigation, of the effect on historians of their membership in a society of professionals. What I would like to do here is to suggest a few of the consequences of that membership.

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The most important consequence of entry into the society of historians is that the entrant is thereafter called upon to write history. To get history written is the only unique purpose of the society, the only trait that unmistakably distinguishes it from other similar societies. To get history written, not to get it taught. Academia itself usually makes teaching a condition of employment for professional historians, and since there are few other paying posts available to them, they teach willy-nilly, usually willy, but sometimes nilly.

The central institution of the society of historians is judgment by peers. He who enters the society of professional historians thereafter subjects himself to the judgment of the other accredited members of that society. This process of judgment determines the relation of the individual historian to that society which more than any other affects his chosen life work. It imposes on the varied individuals who are members of the society a common discipline by precept, and the other institutions of the society enforce that discipline.

One trait of judgment by historical peers sharply differentiates it from such judgment in the courts of law. The latter kind of judgment forbids double jeopardy. A verdict in favor of a man brought to trial on charges before his peers in a court of law is not subject to reversal at any future time by any authority whatsoever. The society of historians acts on a rule diametrically opposite to this—a principle of multiple jeopardy and unlimited reversal. At any time any historian may subject the life work or any fragment of the life work of any other historian to a judgment, and no statute of limitations runs against him. Thucydides, for instance, has recently got into bad trouble. The historian puts himself forever at the mercy of the present and future members of his society each time he emerges from the enclosed comfortable womb of silence into the cold clattering public market place of print.

The subjection of what one writes to judgment by one's peers is not often pleasant, and the temptation to avoid it is strong. By not writing at all one can avoid it. But since the main object of the society of historians is to see to it that history gets written, it cannot tolerate evasion of this sort. To prevent it, the society in which historians work has adopted another institution of the English common law. Rather early, that law had to cope with an analogous problem. Unless a man would plead before his peers to the charges against him, he could not be judged.

To avoid the awkward consequences of this situation the common law employed a device called *peine forte et dure*. The *peine* was provided by weights which were piled on the recalcitrant to encourage him to face judgment. If he persisted in his obduracy, weights continued to be added until he either changed his mind or was crushed to death. The society of historians in its infinite wisdom has so arranged matters that the effective alternative to publishing and facing the judgment of one's peers is to be crushed to death professionally by the weight of their indifference. So for the historian, too, it is "plead or die," or, in another aphorism, "publish or perish." Of course, just as the man before the bar of justice may plead *and* be condemned, it is not at all unlikely that a historian will publish *and* perish; still the odds, however unfavorable, are better than no chance at all, and for the man who never publishes there is no chance at all.

The mechanisms of judgment by peers in the society of historians are numerous and varied, formal and informal, public and private, written and oral. We can deal only briefly with a few of these mechanisms.

It is, of course, in the learned journals that we find the most conspicuous and noisy mechanism for judgment—the book-review section. Also most formal, most formidable, and most effective in the short run, but, unfortunately, perhaps the least accurate and the least competent. Why formal reviewing in the learned journals of the historical profession in America is so bad would take long to explain, because part of the badness is rooted in the very structure of the craft, while another part is related to the character, or rather a few characteristics, of American society as a whole. A third part of the badness is the result of remediable operating deficiencies of the professional journals which could (but probably will not) be corrected with inconvenience only to the editors of those journals.

One or two of the more obvious defects of the review columns of the journals as channels for judgment by peers, however, need to be mentioned. In the first place they move too fast. To a novice historian who with bated breath waits for two years after publication for the first review of his book, the notion that judgment comes too fast will seem ludicrous. What usually delays the review, however, is not the reviewer's deep thinking about the book, but his avoidance of thinking and writing at all about a book concerning which he does not feel he has anything sensible to say, or his mere laziness and insouciance. Moreover, there are more reviewing journals than there are willing and able reviewers. Reviewing is an exacting, time-consuming, ill-rewarded skill likely to win the reviewer more enemies than friends, rarely undertaken by senior members of the society except as a favor to a friend, as part of a brawl with an old opponent, or more properly, and I suspect more frequently, as a part payment of the non-economic dues they owe their profession. Finally, the journals review only books, never an article, no matter how important that article may be. Nonetheless, and

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despite the drawbacks and deficiencies of reviewing, the society of historians needs an evaluation, however tentative, of the output of its members, and the writing historian for professional, practical, and psychological reasons does not want to wait indefinitely for the first shower of roses and/or dead cats.

Even before the long, slow drizzle of reviews of a book is over, the more loosely-structured and, be it said, more reliable judgment by peers starts; and in the case of articles these judgments are the earliest ones. A useful formal and public mechanism of this kind of judgment is the footnote. It is a splendid and versatile instrument which serves many purposes besides its ostensible one—that of indicating where an author claims to find support for a statement. Among these purposes is the provision of a convenient location for the payment of scholarly debts. The instrument of payment is not in its form quite as fully standardized as ordinary commercial instruments, but it usually goes something like "For a fuller discussion of the above point, see Wallaby's solid article, 'The Decline of Possum Hunting in Dade County as a Criterion of Evangelical Revival,' *The Florida Journal of History,* 12 (1947), 12-17. Robert Ryerson's *The Possum as a Frontier Phenomenon: Myth and Reality* (Madison, Wis., 1959) is too general and too unreliable for use." The last part of the above footnote carries its own warning. Those little devices are not merely organs of praise but instruments of judgment, and woe to the miscreant bore who had inflicted his incompetence on an irascible judge with a footnote handy to hang him on.

Academic correspondence provides a private, indeed confidential, but highly effective mechanism of judgment. For example, in answer to an inquiry Professor A. receives the following letter from Professor B., who on other similar occasions has proved to be a reliable source of information: "In connection with the opening you mention in Early Modern History, I have a few suggestions. They do not include Adcock, about whom you specifically ask me. His recent articles suggest that he is very suitably placed in his present job at Grand Guignol State Teachers."

The life of the professional historian is the life of teaching, silent study, work, and writing, interspersed with brief orgies of gossip. According to Adam Smith, where two or three businessmen gather, there is a conspiracy in restraint of trade. According to the apostle, where two or three gather in faith, there is the church. Where two or three historians gather, there is gossip. When historians gossip, there is shop talk and when there is shop talk, there is judgment by peers. It goes on on the steps of Sterling or Widener or the New York Public Library or the National Archives or British Museum or the Bibliothèque Nationale. It goes on among members of the same department, and it goes on with somewhat enhanced intensity at those innumerable meetings of groups with a shared specialization into which the society of professional historians finds it convenient to fracture itself—the Central States Renaissance Conference, the History of Science Society, the Conference on British Studies, and so on. Here is just one very brief sample to show how it works:

"I have been so swamped with chores this semester I haven't had a look at Frisbie's new book on the Scottish Parliaments."

"Don't bother."

The crucial judgments are considerably less casual, and the most careful and painstaking of them take place in the confidential deliberations of *ad hoc* committees and departments of history dealing with appointments and promotions. The better the department the more careful and penetrating the judgment. This I have reason to know because it is my good fortune currently to be a member of the department of history at Yale University. I remember vividly a meeting of the department's permanent officers, its tenured members, some years ago. Should the department meet an offer made to one of its able young members from another university by promoting him to a position that gave him tenure? The small committee which had read all his published work and a manuscript ready to submit to a publisher came in with a split vote. Other members had also done some reading. After two hours of wholly unacrimonious debate, it was evident that the decision would rest on a judgment of the manuscript. "Well," a former president of the American Historical Association said wearily, "it looks like we have to go and do some more homework." So over the next two weeks some twenty-five of the better-paid members of the profession spent a very considerable number of man-hours reading the manuscript and arriving at their tentative individual judgments. They then met again for two more hours of deliberation before coming to their collective judgment. Thank God, judgment is not always, or even often, that expensive, difficult, and time-consuming.

Such then are some of the mechanisms by means of which a historian is judged by his peers from the early days of his apprenticeship until and even after his death.

III

As a structured entity the machinery of judgment by peers in our society is awesome; I can imagine that, called to admire its intricate convolutions, however, some crude iconoclast might ask what purposes of any sort it serves. It serves as the foundation of two other primary institutions of our society. In the first place it establishes the pecking order. It operates as a rating device and develops a consensus

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among historians as to who's who, and how who he is.*

The pecking order along with the movements of demand determines the going prices of particular historians on the job market. To a considerable extent it determines what according to one's rhetorical preference may be called the allocation of the conventional rewards of academia, the apportionment of distributive justice, who gets how big a piece of pie, or the division of the loot. There are, of course, other means, some proper and useful, some sordid, for augmenting the conventional rewards of academia, but probably the surest over the long run is to write history favorably judged by one's peers. Granting exceptions, most of the cushier posts in history's corner of academia are in the hands of historians deemed by their peers to have written competent history.

Our peers in the society of historians then judge us by what we write and subject to *peine forte et dure* those who refuse to produce any testimony on which they can base a judgment. Thereby they aim to apportion the conventional rewards of academia in some more or less sensible relation to the quality-*cum*-quantity of a historian's published work. Presumably this is the way the society to which we belong provides us with incentives to do our job, which is to get history written.

Incentives, however, are only important where the work to be done is dull and unrewarding, but historical research and writing—! A swimming eye and an enraptured set of the face becomes practically mandatory as Parnassus heaves into view with the Muses draped along its slopes and Clio herself doing *entrechats* at the apex. It is a pretty picture, but that is all it is.

A great deal of historical research and writing is stiflingly dull and unrewarding work. The vision of the historian as a sort of intellectual private eye, swashbuckling through a succession of unremittingly fascinating adventures of the mind, can survive only among those who do not destroy it by engaging in historical research. In fact a great deal of historical work is indeed like detective work, like the dreary, patient, systematic, interminable detective work that goes on in dozens of precincts and police headquarters, following dim leads down cold trails to dead ends, just in case; compiling large, uninteresting, and frequently irrelevant dossiers; and questioning dreary and dull sources of information who (or which) often provide not an additional fragment of a clue to what one knows already.

If throughout this harrowing grind our historian has continuously burned with a hard gemlike flame, it is only because God endowed him more generously than He has endowed most men and most historians with the fuel of enthusiasm. Take a stroll some day where the historical researchers congregate in a great library. Note the number of scholars bowed over their desks, their heads resting on their arms. They are not at the moment burning with a hard gemlike flame; they are not thinking deep and exciting thoughts; they are sleeping off their ennui. Their task—the task of historical scholarship—has bored them not to extinction, but to a merciful though temporary oblivion.

STILL the research ends, the writing starts, and the historian at last tastes the pleasure of scholarly creation. Or does he? Well, if he has an aptitude at the management of evidence and a flare for vigorous prose, perhaps he does enjoy himself a good bit. But what if he has not? Then through sheet after sheet of manuscript, past twisted sentences, past contorted paragraphs, past one pitiful wreck of a chapter after another he drags the leaden weight of his club-footed prose. Let us draw a curtain to blot out this harrowing scene and turn to look at one of the fortunate few to whom the writing of a historical study is a pleasure of sorts. He writes the last word of his manuscript with a gay flourish—and he better had, because it is the last gay flourish he is going to be able to indulge in for quite a while. He has arrived at the gray morning-after of historical scholarship, the time of the *Katzenjammer* with the old cigar butts and stale whisky of his recent intellectual binge still to be tidied up. He must reread the manuscript and then read the typescript and correct and revise as he reads. And he must, of course, check the quotations for accuracy of transcription and all the footnotes for accuracy of citation. Then he sends the fruit of this labor to a publisher: and if he is lucky, the publisher accepts it, asking only a thousand dollars or so by way of subvention to cover the cost of printing. In return for this benefaction, the historian gets to read his handiwork again in galley proof and yet again in page proof. And then comes the crowning indignity, when sick to death of his own best effort, he drains the nauseating dregs of historical scholarship; he has to read the damn thing again and prepare an index.

And then? And then judgment by peers. For the unfortunate on whom the verdict is unfavorable, any connoisseur of the review columns of the historical journals knows the delights in store. "Dr. Thompson has thrown new light—but not much of it—on one of the more trivial episodes in Italian diplomatic history." "Dr. Thompson has not chosen to mention my study of Bergamese diplomatic documents, which perhaps he has not thought it worth the trouble to examine." "For an adequate treatment of Dr. Thompson's subject we will still perforce rely on the five magisterial

* For a more broadly based inquiry into the function of publication, see J. H. Hexter, "Publish or Perish—A Defense," the *Public Interest*, Number 17, Autumn 1969, pp. 60-77.

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tomes of Colavito and Gentile published in the 1820's." "Thompson's rather bold and unorthodox view on certain personal eccentricities of Adolfo V, the so-called Mad Duke, are by no means sustained in the more cautious and conservative studies of Best-Chetwynd, F. Hill, Spillane, and de Sade." And so on, as one undergoes the capriciously-timed drip-drip of reviews in the historians' society's version of the Chinese water torture. Under these circumstances the society of historians wisely hangs on to the stick of *peine forte et dure* and the doughnut of the pecking order to keep its balky members pacing the treadmill that grinds out historical research.

Those who cannot contemplate with equanimity the foregoing account of how the wheels of productive historical scholarship are kept in motion would argue that history produced under conditions of labor rather like those of the more satanic early 19th-century textile mills will be worthless. Can men with little taste for historical work really do anything worthwhile? The answer to this question is "yes." The notion may not make happy those generous souls who, confusing their wishes with actuality, believe that competence waits on dedication. It does not. There are lovable, enthusiastic, and inept oafs in our profession, and there are deplorable, nonchalant, and skillful idlers. When the latter are routed out of their sacks and driven to labor in the vineyard they always beat the former hands down in the judgment of their peers.

IV

Readers who have not been distracted by the rhetorical arabesques of the foregoing from their effort to keep clear the lines of argument may have noticed some traces of ambiguity and equivocation. The central purpose of the society of historians, it was pointed out, was to see to it that history got written. The function of judgment by peers was to establish a pecking order for the purpose of facilitating distributive justice. And the purpose of differential distribution of the loot was to hold before historians the prospect of material reward in order to persuade them to dig hard at writing history. Thus judgment by peers was made to seem one of the mechanisms in an integrated series all directed toward maximizing quality/quantity of historical output. Somewhat closer scrutiny has indicated that this is not a very accurate account. Quite evidently, in the matter of encouraging historical scholarship, the pecking order and the allocation of rewards are on the opposite side of the account from judgment by peers. By its terrors the latter prospect discourages publication. It is to be hoped that the pecking order and the prospect of a good share of the loot offset the damage that judgment by peers has done. They work with it only in the misleading sense that an antidote may be said to work with its corresponding poison. Taken alone, judgment by peers does not stimulate the production of historical scholarship; it retards and strangles it.

Then if the purpose of the society of professional historians is merely to get history written, the sensible thing to do is to drop judgment by professional peers altogether. This would not, of course, necessitate giving up the real stimuli to writing history. We would retain *peine forte et dure*, the pecking order, and the differential division of the conventional academic rewards. We would even retain judgment. Only the judges would not be a historian's professional peers. Republican historians would write history for Republicans, to be judged by Republicans; organic-gardening historians would write history for organic gardeners to be judged by organic gardeners, and so on, and we would hire a statistician, an econometrist, and a theory-of-games man to solve the problem of slicing the pie.

Yet even though the incentive system just outlined would almost certainly release a great flood of historical writing, it is doubtful that the society to which historians belong would be willing to settle for it. Despite the fact that judgment by peers dams instead of releases that flood, the society of historians will, I suspect, cling to that institution to which all the rest are geared, and since it inhibits historians from writing, our earlier statement, "The purpose of the society of professional historians is to see to it that history gets written" is incomplete. Completing it is easy enough. One simply adds three words: the purpose of the society of historians is to see to it that history gets written *the right way*. In context "the right way" means "the way our society wants history written."

Although a rough consensus of the society of historians about the details of the right way to write history in fact exists, to describe and explain that consensus would take a good while. There is no doubt, however, as to the common opinion of our society about the goal of the right way. We want history so written that anyone who wants to know anything knowable about the past can find it out; so that where knowledge is possible, it will also be present; so that wherever one seeks footing in the past, there will be as much footing and as solid footing as the careful, patient, and imaginative study of the surviving remnants of the past by men skilled in their craft can make available. It is to just one end that our society maintains its elaborate structure of *peine forte et dure*, judgment by peers, the pecking order, and the differential division of the rewards: that with the exercise of reasonable care and prudence whoever chooses to move about anywhere in the recorded past can find solid ground and not continually be tumbling into bogs, quicksand, crevasses, and pitfalls.

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A couple of specific illustrations of the force of the rules of the game—the guild standards, if you will—on the professional practices and judgments of professional historians may serve better than general allegations to illustrate the way the society of historians polices its members.

Before the Second World War a bright young Englishman wrote a thoroughly competent historical study of an English county in the 16th century. For more than a decade he continued to write competent historical studies. He had started out as a Marxist. (It was stylish at Oxbridge in the 30's to be a Marxist. Radical chic is not an invention of the late 1960's.) Gradually a cluster of peculiar changes overtook the young historian, no longer so young. Once a Marxist, he turned into a Tory when Toryism became modish. Once able to command the attention of his professional peers in England, later he commanded the attention only of lecture-tour audiences and of uninformed readers of the New York *Times Book Review* in America. Once poor, he became rich. Once a professional historian of considerable parts, he became the fabricator of careless, sleazy, incompetent, widely-sold potboilers. And his professional peers who had once paid respectful attention to the young Marxist paid disrespectful attention and then almost no attention at all to the aging Tory. Not because he had ceased to be a Marxist and become a Tory, not because, a former small seller, he became a big seller, not because, once poor, he was now rich. No, simply because he had broken the rules of the society of professional historians to which he had once belonged and on whose respect his self-respect ultimately depended; he had made himself into an unreliable hack. Professional historians had no occasion to refer to what he was saying about the past, because what he said was not worth referring to. So his later writings died a few months after they came off the press. As a professional historian he was in effect cut off in his prime—suicide or homicide or oddly a combination of both. In any case, the society to which he had belonged, the society of professional historians, showed a remarkable capacity for conferring early mortality on an erring member and on all his later works. As a historian he is now a corpse with a pocketful of money, scarcely an adequate recompense for an early demise.

THE SECOND illustration is more edifying. It concerns a young scholar, Professor Jesse Lemisch, who proclaims himself a radical historian. He has recently published "Radical Plot in Boston (1770): A Study in the Use of Evidence,"* a twenty-page review of Hiller Zobel's *The Boston Massacre*. Professor Lemisch's view is unfavorable to the book. He charges Zobel with "proof by dint of no evidence or contradictory evidence." Zobel argues, for example, that the mob in Boston was " 'controlled but in appearance unchecked.' " Yet the evidence says nothing of control and an abundance about excessive spontaneity. Further, "Zobel consistently avoids evidence against his case." His case being that the Boston mob was manipulated, he fails to follow up clues, embedded in the evidence which he himself offers, that some of the Boston rioters were moved by a genuine sense of grievance, indeed perhaps by genuine grievances against the British troops. What he does with respect to the Boston mob he also does to the colonial leaders. He indulges in selective quotation. Thus John Adams's serious alarm at what in his own words he construed as "the determination in Great Britain to subjugate us" by military occupation is reduced by Zobel's omission of that quotation to mere " 'annoyance.' " Further, Zobel's " 'positive identification' " of rioters in 1765 is based on "information from indictments—to which the accused pled not guilty and were never tried—for a riot which took place" during 1764. And so on.

From a reading of the review, two points to our purpose emerge clearly. First, Zobel takes a view of the behavior of the American colonials slightly more jaundiced than that of George III, and some of Lemisch's animus in the review results from ideological hostility to a historical perception different from his own. This is clear from some of his asides, such as:

> Can the lawyer [Zobel] draw from his studies of the preliminaries of a past American revolution no better "lesson" . . . than obedience, authority, the hard line. . . . It may be appropriate to remind the reader at this point that in the years following the Massacre such policies carried out by the people whom Zobel admires and on whom he relies for the greater part of his evidence precipitated revolution.†

With serious qualifying additions and amendments, I happen to draw from the recent "youth revolution" in the United States substantially the lesson of "obedience, authority, the hard line," which Lemisch finds lamentable. Moreover, in Lemisch's case casually and accidentally I have followed E. H. Carr's injunction, "Before you study the history, study the historian." Having done so, as a student of the sociology of knowledge, I can then understand Mr. Lemisch's review of Zobel's book as a manifestation of youthful academic malaise in the early 1970's.

But second, with respect to the society of the sociologists of knowledge I am a mere spectator. It is not the society I belong to. I belong to the society of historians, and my membership in it requires me to attend not to Lemisch's current socio-political postures in 1971, which I think will be ephemeral and which do not especially interest

* *Harvard Law Review*, Volume 84, pp. 485-504.

† *Ibid.*, p. 504. In the review the last sentence appears as a footnote to the one that precedes it above.

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me, but to the substance of his criticism of a book about 1770. That substance, what he says about the uses of dubious evidence and loaded language, seems to me to leave Zobel with a good many tough questions to answer. If he cannot answer them, he or someone else will have to modify his account of the Boston Massacre not to satisfy *radical* historians, but to satisfy historians. That is what makes the note Professor Lemisch wrote on the copy of the review he kindly sent me almost touchingly wrongheaded:

> For Jack Hexter,
> from a radical asking some conservative questions about evidence and proof. . . .

The whole implication of Lemisch's review is that there are no such things as radical or conservative questions about evidence and proof. Historical evidence is slight or abundant, dubious or trustworthy. Historical proof is difficult or easy, adequate or inadequate. Evidence and proof are never radical or conservative. Rather, they are part of the common language in which historians communicate with one another, the common ground on which they stand or fall. They are part of the discipline which, soon or late, the society of historians imposes on *all* its members

From the men who write history and are then dragged in fear and trembling before their peers for judgment we have made the traverse to the society of historians which in willing the end of solid footing in the past wills the means by which it is produced, and its quality policed—judgment by peers with all the pain it entails. *But the society of historians is composed of the very people it drags up for judgment. In effect the society of all historians in general wills the torments that each of them undergoes.*

Though many members of the society of professional historians would like to improve the efficiency of its institutions, odd as it may seem, not one, I think, wants to destroy judgment by peers. For however annoying it may be to historians as individuals, still knowing the deep-grained sinfulness of all flesh, they know very well that judgment by peers is what stands between them and slovenliness, pamphleteering, distortion of data, laziness, habitual inaccuracy, dullness beyond the call of duty, and a host of other evils which ultimately and cumulatively would mean the collapse of our society's morale, the frustration of its ends, and therefore, be it noted, the failure of all of us in our calling. Rousseau's conception of the general will as something different not only from the will of each but even from the will of all has sometimes been derided and often is misunderstood. I know of no better illustration of the meaning of the general will than its mode of operation in the society of professional historians in the matter of judgment by peers, where to achieve a recognized and acknowledged common good, by a general consent and working through general rules, the will of historians as members of that society imposes itself on the often tough and truculent individual wills of all its members.

V

The historical relativist and the *aficionado* of the sociology of knowledge profess to be profoundly impressed by the impact of Society on historians. On one side, according to them, there are the sources—the unshaped, unsifted surviving records of the past. And on the other hand is the historian's Society with a capital S, which is just about everything that goes on during the historian's lifetime. Society screeches and roars and hisses in the historian's ear. Each day it passes vividly and living before his eyes. It stinks in his nostrils, and pounds him on the head, and tramples his feet, and squeezes his hands, and tugs at his heart-strings, and turns his stomach, and kicks him, and pats him on the back. Of course, with his soul-filling experiences of his Society on one side and the scatter of colorless records of the past on the other, our historian simply impresses on the record whatever is most important or vivid to him at the moment in his current responses to his Society. One thing, however, he appears never to do: he never reads a book by another historian bearing on the historical problem about which he is concerned. In this respect unlike any professional historian for the past century, this Byronic character of the relativists' dream is an absolute unqualified individualist. The fact is that for all their talk about Society, the relativist and the sociologist of knowledge wholly disregard the impact on historians of that society—the only society—to which as professionals all historians belong, and thus they miss the true social character of historical work. They disregard the extraordinary extent to which the history that gets written is formed by the society of historians acting through, on, and in the individual historian.

Most of the history written by a professional historian works within a dual reference system. That system refers him 1) to the contemporary sources used by the historian, and 2) to the work of other historians used by him, and he is obliged to certify his competence by referring back in his footnotes to the sources and the work of other historians. Under the strong safe cover afforded by this latter obligation the society of historians in arrayed battalions marches square into the work of each of its members. Where there is a "literature" on any subject which a historian deals with he is supposed to know that literature. But to "know the literature" is not to know all the books and articles related somehow or other to the subject. Some books and articles are obsolete, some are trivial and worthless. Some antiquated works will have fallen from the bibli-

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ographies and footnotes, or because of exemplary incompetence will never even have got into them. But the very tasks of genocide and infanticide which lead to this result have been performed for the historian by his society. Nevertheless, the number of works by other historians consulted in producing a single monograph often runs into the hundreds, so Mr. Carr's precept, "When we take up a work of history our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it," seems less a counsel of despair than an invitation to madness. In effect by this point in the history of history-writing practically all history is collaborative. The subjects which no historian has touched on before, on which no investigation, even tangential, has been attempted are negligible. Even if he repudiates all current views and regards all previous investigations as tissues of error, a historian must implicitly or explicitly counter those views and undermine those investigations. Even when he does not lean on the work of other historians he must specifically lean away from that work. And such drastic leaning away is the marginal case. The bulk of historical work involves modification rather than subversion.

If, from the beginning, a historian's writing is "socialized" by the necessary employment of the work of other historians, at the end it is "socialized" again through judgment by peers. The apparatus of judgment warns readers of areas of weakness, indicates areas of strength, points to what is old and decrepit, to what is new and deserving of attention. Finally, and most important, the very prospect of judgment by peers socializes the writing of history while the historian is writing it. Knowing that his place in the pecking order, his share of the rewards, and his own estimate of himself depend on that judgment, he takes pains to do those things his peers approve of and to avoid those which they condemn. What they approve is imaginative compliance with the rules which help to extend the area and increase the firmness of footing for those who seek knowledge of the past. I can only once more express my astonishment that the men who have talked most glibly about the conditioning of the historian by his society have never done at all what is here done rather badly: examine the relation between historians and the society to which they belong, the society on whose estimate of them, their level of income, their standing among their fellows, and their own judgment of their life achievement largely depend.

VI

In my penultimate observations I should like to indulge myself in the luxury of parables.

Once upon a time three men were considering going into the import business. Their names were Albert, Bertram, and Claude, or A., B., and C. They were inlanders who had never seen a freighter, so they came to a port to have a look around. The first ship Albert boarded was a miserable old tub. "What's this hulk for?" Albert asked. He was told it was to carry freight. Then he went below deck where he saw that the ship leaked at every seam and that there were three feet of water in the hold. Albert shrewdly observed, "Sea water will damage any cargo this wreck carries." And he was right. The second ship he boarded was in as bad shape as the first. "Sea water will damage what this wreck carries, too," he sneered, and he was right again. Then he visited another ship. He went down into the hold and he saw an inch of water in it. Being a clear-headed man, he thought as follows: "All ships have some water in their holds. Therefore on all ships the cargo suffers water damage. Therefore it does not matter what ship you buy cargo from." As a result of this brilliant syllogism he bought indiscriminately. Of course nobody in the market trusted his judgment, so even when he lucked into a good consignment he found no customers. Albert or A. went broke. But consequently among people not in the business, he became a sort of hero; and he was called by them an import relativist, because, they said, he had proved that all imports were relatively wet.

Our second man, B. or Bertram, was a more reflective type than Albert. He, too, inspected several freighters. Taking his clue from the seepage of sea water in all ships, he decided that freighters were apparatus for the collection of oceanographic information. A careful study of seepage would provide data on the nature of the waters which the ship was currently traveling, a sort of sociology of the sea, so to speak. This conclusion had drawbacks, however. On the view that the value of freighters lies in the contribution their bilge-water makes to the sociology of the sea, the leakier the tub the better. If freighters are mainly important for their leakiness, why do the better operators take so much pains to make them as watertight as they can? Moreover, whatever the contribution the investigations proposed by Bertram might make to oceanography or the sociology of the sea, they are of no use at all to people who want to know which freighters carry clean, dry cargo.

And it was to just this problem of clean cargo that C. or Claude addressed himself. Being a man of drearily systematic habits, he kept lists of freighters and checked their holds on several of their returns to port. He also checked with other importers and with underwriters whose interest it was to learn which freighters took good care of their cargo. He knew that even the tightest ships ended their crossings with a little water in the hold; but he also knew exactly how those ships were loaded, so although a bit of their cargo occasionally got damaged he rarely bought that

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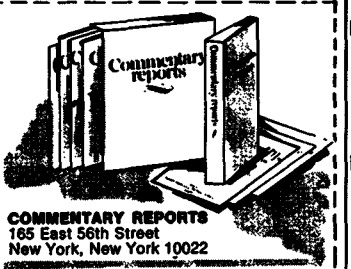
part of it. Now he did *not* say that all imports were relatively wet; he said some were wet and some were dry, and that he could tell the difference; so the import relativists called him an absolutist and regarded him as naive. And the fauna and flora in the water that seeped into the bilge did not interest him very much, since what he really was concerned about was the quality of the cargo. So sociologists of the sea thought he was simpleminded and possibly a reactionary. But the other people in the importing line had a different name for him. They called him an old pro.

Here endeth the parable and here almost ends this sociological inquiry. To give a specious penumbra of legitimacy and relevance to my observations on the import business, I will finish with something about a shelf in a library. It is in the British History section. Adjacent to each other on that shelf are Francis Aidan Cardinal Gasquet's *Henry VIII and the English Monasteries* (1888), and Geoffrey Baskerville's *English Monks and the Suppression of the Monasteries* (1937). Now the historical relativist will smile tolerantly at this juxtaposition because it shows, does it not, what happens when you turn a Catholic and a skeptic loose on the English monasteries and their dissolution? You get just the difference of opinion you would expect, Gasquet all sympathy and Baskerville all sneers, and it is all relative to the social prejudices and prepossessions of the two historians. So it does prove, does it not, that Mr. Carr was right after all, and that when "we take up a work of history our first concern should be not with the facts which it contains but with the historian who wrote it"? The sociologist of knowledge, however, observes that the differences are very instructive, since they provide clues to the ideologies current in the 1880's and the 1930's, although of course they tell you nothing for sure about the 1530's. Finally, perhaps an old pro comes by the shelf of the library whereon Gasquet and Baskerville repose. Out of long habit he runs his eyes further down the shelf. There they light on four massive volumes, *The Monastic Order in England* and *The Religious Orders in England*. He observes as he examines them that the author of those volumes, the late Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, has taken the infinite pains that professional historians are trained to take, in order to keep his cargo free of the sea water of current ideological conflict. Therefore, the old pro does not need long to decide that those volumes rather than Gasquet or Baskerville carry the goods he wants to buy. In fact, all the professional traders have transferred their custom to the late Regius Professor while between occasional and increasingly rare charterings by enthusiastic and incompetent amateurs, Gasquet and Baskerville rot away at the dock. And, of course, it does not matter at all that the late Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, Dom David Knowles, was a Catholic priest and a Benedictine monk. Although paradoxically, in the context which at the moment concerns us, that it does not matter at all is what matters most of all.



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Sensibility in the 60's

Daniel Bell

EACH decade—we think now of decades or generations as the units of social time—has its hallmarks. That of the 1960's was a political and cultural radicalism. The politics is, for the moment, spent, but cultural radicalism follows a more complicated course. I propose to examine here the cultural radicalism of the 60's through the prism of its sensibility, in order to cast light on changes in the society itself.

In defining the sensibility of the 60's, one can see it in two ways: as a reaction to the sensibility of the 50's; and as a reversion to, and yet also an extension of, an earlier sensibility which reached its apogee in the modernism of the years before World War I.

The sensibility of the 50's was largely a literary one. In the writings of such representative critics of the period as Lionel Trilling, Yvor Winters, and John Crowe Ransom, the emphasis was on complexity, irony, ambiguity, and paradox. These are properties peculiar to the mind. They foster a critical attitude, a detachment and distance which guard one against any overwhelming involvement, absorption, immolation in a creed or an experience. At worst a form of quietism, at best a mode of self-consciousness, this attitude is essentially moderate in tone. The sensibility of the 60's rejected that mood in savage, even mindless fashion. In its fury with the times, the new sensibility was loud, imprecatory, prone to obscenity, and given to posing every issue, political or otherwise, in disjunctive correlatives.

The more enduring mood, however, derives from the earlier impulses. The modernist innovations that flared so effulgently between 1895 and 1914 wrought two extraordinary changes in the culture. First there was a set of *formal* revolutions in the arts—the breakup of poetic syntax, the stream-of-consciousness in fiction, the multiplicity of the picture plane on the canvas, the rise of atonality in music, the loss of sequence in temporal representation and of foreground and background in spatial pictorialization. And second there was a new presentation of the self which Roger Shattuck (in *The Banquet Years*) has characterized in terms of four traits—the cult of childhood; the delight in the absurd; the reversal of values so as to celebrate the baser rather than the higher impulses; and a concern with hallucination.

That earlier sensibility—at least judging from these four traits—was still very much with us in the 60's, albeit in a shriller and harsher form. The stress on the pain of childhood was replaced, in the "confessional" poetry of Robert Lowell, Anne Sexton, and Sylvia Plath, by the revelation of the most private experiences—even psychotic seizures—of the poet, though the sense of innocence remained intact in the work of poets like Allen Ginsberg, with its visionary emphasis derived from Whitman, Blake, and the Indian Vedas. The sense of absurdity was extended so that—as in the plays of Ionesco—objects began to take on a life of their own. The reversal of values became virtually complete, though all joy and prankishness were drained out of the celebration of the base. Hallucination, of course, was enthroned in the drug and psychedelic experience.

Yet to all this the sensibility of the 60's also added something distinctly its own; a concern with violence and cruelty; a preoccupation with the sexually perverse; a desire to make noise; an anti-cognitive and anti-intellectual mood; an effort once and for all to erase the boundary between "art" and "life"; and a fusion of art and politics. To take each of these traits briefly, in turn:

The violence and cruelty that one saw splashed on film was not meant to effect catharsis, but sought instead to shock, to maul, to sicken. Films, Happenings, paintings vied with each other in presenting gory detail. One was told that such violence and cruelty simply reflected the world around us, but the 1940's, a gorier and far more brutal decade, did not produce the lingering on sanguinary detail one found in films of the 60's like *Bonnie and Clyde* and *M*A*S*H*.

The sexually perverse is as old as Sodom and Gomorrah, at least in recorded time, but rarely has it ever been flaunted as openly and directly as in the 60's. In such films as Andy Warhol's *The Chelsea Girls*, in the Swedish *I Am Curious (Yellow)*, in such plays as *Futz* and *Ché*, one

DANIEL BELL, professor of sociology at Harvard, is the author of, among other works, *The End of Ideology*. The present essay is adapted from a work in progress tentatively entitled, "The Disjunction of Culture and Social Structure."

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found an obsessive preoccupation with homosexuality, transvestism, buggery, and, most pervasive of all, publicly displayed oral-genital intercourse. What this obsession seemed to represent was a flight from heterosexual life, perhaps in response to the release of aggressive female sexuality which was becoming evident at the end of the decade.

The 50's, one could almost say of its sensibility, had been a period of silence. The plays of Samuel Beckett tried to achieve a sense of silence, and the music of John Cage even attempted an aesthetic of silence. But the 60's was preeminently a period of noise. Beginning with the "new sound" of the Beatles in 1964, rock reached such soaring crescendos that it was impossible to hear oneself think: and that may indeed have been its intention.

The anti-cognitive, anti-intellectual mood was summed up in the attack on "content" and interpretation, in the emphasis on form and style, in the turn to "cooler" media like film and dance —a sensibility, in Susan Sontag's words, "based on indiscriminateness, without ideas [and] beyond negation."

Erasing the boundary between art and life was a further aspect of the breakup of genre, the conversion of a painting into a Happening, the taking of art out of the museum into the environment, the turning of all experience into art, whether it had form or not. By celebrating life, this process tended to destroy art.

Art and politics were probably more intensely fused in the 60's than at any time in modern history. During the 1930's, art had served politics, but in a heavyhanded ideological way. In the 60's the emphasis was not on ideological content, but on temper and mood. Guerrilla theater and demonstration art had little content except anger. One would have to go back to the anarchism of the 1890's, when art was also flushed with politics, to find a comparable tone, but what was most evident in the 1960's was the scale and intensity of feeling that was not only anti-government, but almost entirely anti-institution and ultimately antinomian as well.

And yet what is striking about the 60's is that with all the turbulence, there was not one noteworthy revolution in aesthetic form. The preoccupation with machines and technology only served to recall the Bauhaus and Moholy-Nagy; the theater echoed the practices of Alfred Jarry and the theories of Antonin Artaud; the japes in art repeated Dada or drew rhetorically from surrealism. Only in the novel, perhaps, in the linguistic brilliance of Nabokov, the spatial dislocations of Burroughs, and in some elements of the *nouveau roman* in France, did any interesting innovations appear. It was a decade, despite all the talk of form and style, empty of originality in both. But in sensibility, there was an exacerbation of tone and temper, the fruits of an anger, political in origin, which spilled over into art as well. What remains of importance for cultural history was the mood, which turned against art, and the effort by large masses to adopt and act out the life style which hitherto had been the property of a small and talented elite.

II

The Dissolution of "Art"

THE arbiters of culture in the 1950's prided themselves on holding out against the indiscriminate, the meretricious, and the trashy which were pouring from the mass media, and the pretentious and the arty which were the stamp of what was then universally known as "middlebrowism." They sought to do this by insisting on a classic conception of culture and by setting forth a trans-historical and transcendental criterion for the judgment of art.

Perhaps the most incisive formulation of this point of view was Hannah Arendt's. "Works of art," she wrote, "are made for the sole purpose of appearance. The proper criterion by which to judge appearance is beauty . . . in order to become aware of appearances we must first be *free to establish a certain distance* between ourselves and the object. . . ."

We have here a Greek view of art in which culture is essentially contemplative. Art is not life, but in a sense something contrary to life, since life is transient and changing while art is permanent. To this Miss Arendt adds the Hegelian concept of *objectification*. A work of art is the projection by the creative person of an idea or an emotion into an object outside himself: ". . . What is at stake here," Miss Arendt wrote, "is much more than the psychological state of the artist; it is the objective status of the cultural world which insofar as it contains tangible things —books and paintings, statues, buildings, and music—comprehends, and gives testimony to, the entire recorded past of countries, nations, and ultimately of mankind. As such the only nonsocial and authentic criterion for judging these specifically cultural things is their relative permanence and even eventual immortality. Only what will last through the centuries can ultimately claim to be a cultural object."

The paradox is that this view—which in the 1960's came to seem so archaic—was undercut not by the lowbrows or middlebrows but by the highbrows—the very prelectors of modern culture themselves. For in seeking to define what was distinctive about the new sensibility, they denied precisely the terms set forth by Miss Arendt. The locus of art and culture, they argued, had moved from the independent work to the personality of the artist, from the permanent object to the transient process. It was Harold Rosenberg, explicating the work of Jackson Pollock, Willem de Kooning, Franz Kline, and other "action paint-

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ers," as he called them, who first stated the concept forcefully:

"At a certain moment," Rosenberg wrote, "the canvas began to appear to one American painter after another as an arena in which to act—rather than as a space in which to reproduce, re-design, analyze, or 'express' an object, actual or imagined. *What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event.* . . . In this gesturing with materials the aesthetic, too, has been subordinated. Form, color, composition, drawing . . . can be dispensed with. What matters always is the revelation contained in the act."

If painting is an action, there is no difference between the preliminary sketch and the finished object. The second cannot be "better" or more complete than the first. There are no preliminaries or hierarchies in art, and each act is an event by itself. In effect, the work *qua* work is dissolved in the act, and so is the critic. "The new painting," Mr. Rosenberg concluded, "has broken down every distinction between art and life. It follows that anything is relevant to it. Anything that has to do with action—psychology, philosophy, history, mythology, hero-worship. Anything but art criticism. The painter gets away from art through his act of painting; the critic can't get away from it. The critic who goes on judging in terms of schools, styles, form—as if the painter was still concerned with producing a certain kind of object (the work of art) instead of living on the canvas—is bound to seem a stranger."

MR. ROSENBERG proved a formidably accurate prophet. The entire movement of art in the 60's sought to dissolve the work of art as a "cultural object," and erase the distinction between subject and object and between art and life. Nowhere was this more apparent than in sculpture, or in the fusion of sculpture and painting, and the dissolution of both into spaces, environments, motions, media-mixes, Happenings, and the creation of "man-machine" interaction systems.

Sculpture classically dealt preeminently with objects. It concerned itself with mass as solid form, and was anchored in three-dimensional space. It was placed on a base or plinth that removed it spatially from the mundane ground or wall. In the 60's all this went. The base was removed so that the sculpture fused with its surroundings. Mass dissolved into space and space turned into motion.

Thus the "minimal sculpture" (of Donald Judd, Robert Morris, Dan Flavin) abandoned imagery altogether. It sought to be nothing other than what it set forth: boxes, shapes, relations which were neither organic nor figurative nor emblematic nor anthropomorphic. They were literally *Dinge an sich*. Similarly in the case of a show organized by the Whitney Museum in the summer of 1968, which was labeled "Anti-Illusion: Procedures and Materials." The materials were hay, grease, dirt, dog food, etc. The catalogue notes by James Monte opened with the observation: "The radical nature of many works in this exhibition depends less on the fact that new materials are being used by the artists than on the fact that the acts of conceiving and placing the pieces take precedence over the object quality of the works." The sculptures "each exist in either a deobjectified or scattered or dislocated state and in some instances the three conditions simultaneously."

Lynda Benglis's works of latex were poured onto the floor and allowed to develop their own form. Barry La Va used combinations of bulk chalk and mineral oil in conjunction with paper or cloth; when mixed, different forms emerged, depending on the degree of dryness or dampness, absorption or saturation. "La Va is able to use time as a substantial element in the recent pieces; he can project the sequential development of the work in a way analogous to that in which a biologist estimates the growth of micro-organisms developed in a laboratory." The air sculpture of Michael Asher was literally a curtain of air defining the height, width, and depth of a transit area from one gallery to the next. One felt the "space" by pressure on the body when passing through. "The disembodied literalism of the piece neatly alludes to a slab form without carpentry. Feeling and therefore knowing replaces the cycle of seeing and hence knowing the sculptural presence."

In 1968, too, Robert Morris declared before a notary public that he was "withdraw[ing]" from a construction he had made "all aesthetic quality and content." Commenting on this extreme development of the "anti-form" movement, Harold Rosenberg wrote: "Aesthetic withdrawal . . . legitimizes 'process' art—in which chemical, biological, physical or seasonal forces affect the original materials and either change their form or destroy them, as in works incorporating growing grass and bacteria or inviting rust—and random art, whose form and content are divided by chance. Ultimately, the repudiation of the aesthetic suggests the total elimination of the art object and its replacement by an idea for a work or by the rumor that one has been consummated—as in conceptual art. Despite the stress on the actuality of the materials used, the principle common to all classes of de-aestheticized art is that the finished product, if any, is of less significance than the procedures that brought the work into being and of which it is the trace."

A decade after his initial—and, at the time, approving—explication of "gestural" or "process" art, Rosenberg was now clearly a shade unhappy at the strident stage which this tendency had reached. He was now at pains to remind the younger artists that "aesthetic qualities inhere in things whether or not they are works of art. The

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aesthetic is not an element that exists separately, to be banished at the will of the artist. Morris could no more withdraw aesthetic content from his construction than he could inject it where it was missing."

PAINTING has followed a similar trajectory. From its origins in the distant past, painting always based itself on two elements: a symmetrical, geometric field and a flat surface. The first cave painter who put a line around the image he drew on the wall separated the picture from the environment; painting then became a symbol, rather than a magical manipulation, of reality.

Over the last hundred years, there have been many revolutions in painting. Pictorial space was broken up in many different ways: after Post-Impressionism, the shutters were closed on the interior distance, as Maurice Denis has put it, and painters became concerned primarily with surface, with color, with catching a sense of simultaneity, as in Cubism, by placing several planes on one plane, or, as in the paintings of Hofmann and de Kooning, with pigment itself.

In the last decades, we have witnessed the final break with field and surface, the traditional arena of painting. Pasted matter, as in collage, breaks up the surface; shaped canvases break up the geometrical field. Assemblages come off the wall. Environments surround the individual. In these two milieus, as Allan Kaprow, a leader of the new movement, points out, the illusion of space in the painting becomes the literal distance between all the solids in the work.

In 1969, the Museum of Modern Art gave its imprimatur to the new movement with the show "Spaces," organized by Jennifer Licht. Here the eclipse of distance was complete: the picture was reversed and the spectator stood within rather than without. Miss Licht wrote: "In the past, space was merely an attribute of a work of art, rendered by illusionistic conventions in painting or by displacement of volume in sculpture, and the space that separated viewer and object was ignored as just distance. This invisible dimension is now being considered as an active ingredient, not simply to be represented but to be shaped and characterized by the artist, and capable of involving and merging viewer and art in a situation of greater scope and scale. In effect, one now enters the interior space of the work of art—an area formerly experienced only visually from without, approached, but not encroached upon—and is presented with a set of conditions rather than a finite object."

The show consisted of six rooms, or spaces, one of which was filled with large constructions of yellow and green fluorescent light tubes. Another room had white acoustical panels. A third, of vacuum-coated glass, was almost entirely black. In a fourth, a gymnasium-like room, one could lie on mats or be wrapped in canvas shrouds and the like. In the garden a light, sound, and heat environment was organized by the Pulse group to provide a mixed-media response.

ENVIRONMENTAL art erases the boundary between the space and the person. Happenings erase the distance between the situation, or event, and the spectator. In Happenings, not just color and space but also heat, smell, taste, and motion become aspects of the work. As Allan Kaprow puts it: "Fundamentally, Environments and Happenings are similar. They are passive and active sides of a single coin whose principle is *extension*."

A Happening is a pastiche that combines an environment as art-setting with a theatrical performance. It was originally a painters' theater in which one saw the manipulation of objects and materials that made up the field of painting taken down from the wall, and put into the open. It brings the spectator into the process of "creation" itself.

In a Happening, as Jan Kott has observed, "all the signs are literal: a pyramid of chairs is only a pile of chairs placed one on top of the other; a stream of water which drenches the audience is merely a stream of water which drenches the viewers. In reality, there is not even a partition between the viewer and actors. . . ."

In this, the mimetic and symbolic functions of theater, to use Kott's language, are eliminated. The expressive content becomes dissolved in the literal, and meanings as metaphor or emblems disappear. Even the idea of the evocative loses meaning because the event does not represent or picture something—it *is*. The emphasis on the literal is part of the attack on metaphysical expression. In Zen, for example, a philosophy which during the 60's attracted many painters and poets, one does not use words like *hard* or *soft*, for these are attributes or qualities of a substance; and qualities and substance are metaphysical terms. One has to be exactly literal, and if comparisons are made they must refer to specific tactile experiences denoted by stone, wood, water, etc.

Such immersion in experience is a disruption of aesthetic distance, for one has lost control over the experience if one cannot step back and conduct one's own "dialogue" with the work of art. This eclipse of distance, as I have characterized it,* represents the overturning of the rational cosmology—the orderly sequence of time, of beginning and middle and end, as well as the "internal" organization of divided space, of foreground and background, of figure and ground—which has shaped Western conceptions of aesthetic experience since Alberti in the 15th century. It is not only the dissolution of the cultural object, the work of art, into a process. It is the dissolution of the self into experience.

* *Encounter*, May 1965.

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III

The Democratization of Genius

THE notion of a hierarchy in the arts and of a cultural division of the audience (e.g., highbrows, middlebrows, and lowbrows), which was the hallmark of such representative cultural interpreters of the 1950's as Hannah Arendt and Dwight Macdonald, necessarily implied the idea of standards and a vocation which guarded and defined those standards; namely, criticism. The 1940's and the 1950's have in fact been called the age of the critic and of the critical schools: the New Criticism of John Crowe Ransom, the textual criticism of R. P. Blackmur, the moral criticism of Lionel Trilling, the socio-historical criticism of Edmund Wilson, the dramaturgical stance of Kenneth Burke, the linguistic analysis of I. A. Richards, the mythopoeic criticism of Northrop Frye.

The theme of the 60's, in contrast, was a distrust of criticism. Susan Sontag, a leading theurgist of the new sensibility, declared: "Today . . . the project of interpretation is largely reactionary. Like the fumes of the automobile and of heavy industry which befoul the urban atmosphere, the effusion of interpretations of art today poisons our sensibilities. . . . Interpretation is the revenge of the intellect upon art. Even more. It is the revenge of the intellect upon the world."

It was not only criticism but literature, with its "heavy burden of 'content,'" which drugged the senses. The "model arts of our time," she wrote, "are actually those with much less content, and a much cooler mode of moral judgment—like music, films, dance, architecture, painting, sculpture."

Inevitably, the distinction between "high" and "low" (or "mass" or "popular") culture came in for special scorn. As Miss Sontag saw it, this was merely a distinction between "unique and mass-produced objects." In an era of mass technological reproduction, the work of the serious artist was deemed to have a special value because it bore an individual, personal signature. "But in the light of contemporary practice in the arts, this distinction appears extremely shallow. Many of the serious works of art of recent decades have a decidedly impersonal character . . . rather than . . . 'individual personal expression.'"

The new sensibility was a redemption of the senses from the mind. "Sensations, feelings, the abstract forms and styles of sensibility count. It is to these that contemporary art addresses itself . . . we are what we are able to see (hear, taste, smell, feel) even more powerfully and profoundly than we are what furniture of ideas we have stocked in our heads."

Moreover, "if art is understood as . . . a programming of sensations, then the feeling (or sensation) given off by a Rauschenberg painting might be like that of a song by the Supremes." Thus, further distinctions were erased and sophisticated painting and popular music became equally valid for the "reorganization of consciousness," or of the "sensorium," which was now proclaimed as the function of art. In all this there was a "democratization" of culture in which nothing could be considered "high" or "low," a syncretism of styles in which all sensations mingled equally, and a world of sensibility which was accessible to all.

IF THERE was a democratization of culture in which a radical egalitarianism of feeling superseded the older hierarchy of mind, there was also, by the end of the 60's, a democratization of "genius." The idea of the artist as genius, as a being apart who (in the description of Edward Shils) "need not regard the laws of society and its authorities" and who "aimed only to be guided by the inner necessities of the expansion of the self—to embrace new experiences," goes back to the early 19th century. The artist, it was thought, looked at the world from a special point of view. Whistler proclaimed that artists were a class apart whose standards and aspirations stood outside the comprehension of the vulgar. If there was "a conflict between a genius and his public," Hegel declared in a sentence which (as Irving Howe has noted) thousands of critics, writers, and publicists have echoed through the years, "it must be the public that is to blame . . . the only obligation the artist can have is to follow truth and his genius."

In France, where the "man of letters," as Tocqueville observed, had long taken the lead in "shaping the national temperament and the outlook on life," this tradition took particularly deep hold. Not only were artists different, by virtue of their genius, from other mortals, they were also intended to be, as Victor Hugo put it, the "sacred leaders" of the nation. Indeed, with the decline of religion, the writer was more and more invested with the prerogatives of the priest, for he was seen as a man endowed with supernatural vision. In a stultifying world, the writer alone was the unadaptable man, the wanderer—like Rimbaud—in perpetual flight from the mundane. Joyce in Trieste, Pound in London, Hemingway in Paris, Lawrence in Taos, Allen Ginsberg in India, are the very prototypes of this artist-hero type in the 20th century. The pilgrimage to places far from the bourgeois home had become a necessary step in attaining independence of vision.

Underlying all of this is the belief that art tells a truth which is higher than that perceived via the ordinary cognitive mode, that the "language" of art, in the words of Herbert Marcuse, "must communicate a truth, an objectivity which is not accessible to ordinary language and ordinary experience."

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But what if, as Lionel Trilling has wryly observed (in a view which even "rather surprises" himself), ". . . art does not always tell the truth or the best kind of truth and does not always point out the right way"? What if art "can even generate falsehood and habituate us to it, and . . . on frequent occasions . . . might well be subject, in the interests of autonomy, to the scrutiny of the rational intellect"? This question is perhaps too large to be gone into here. But the exaltation of the artistic vision above all others also raises another, more pressing question: If the language of art is not accessible to ordinary language and ordinary experience, how can it be accessible to ordinary people?

One solution of the 60's was to make each man his own artist-hero. In May 1968, the students at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris called for a development of consciousness which would guide the "creative activity immanent in every individual" so that the "work of art" and "the artist" become "mere moments in this activity." And a 1969 catalogue of revolutionary art at the Moderna Muséet in Stockholm carried this injunction further by declaring that "Revolution is Poetry. There is poetry in all those acts which break the system of organization." But such activist pronouncements—and the 60's were not lacking in them—do not solve the problem of modernism, they only evade it.

At the heart of the problem is the relationship of culture to tradition. When one speaks of a classical culture, or a Catholic culture, for example, one thinks of a long-linked set of beliefs, traditions, and rituals which over the course of history have achieved a distinctive style. The style results not only from an internally cohesive set of commonsense perceptions or formal conventions, but also from some notion of an ordered universe and of man's place in it. By its very nature, modernity breaks with the past, *as* past, and erases it in favor of the present or the future. Men are enjoined to make themselves anew rather than to extend the great chain of being. Aristocracy, Tocqueville once said, links all members of the community from king to peasant, while democracy breaks the chain, severing each of its links. As a result, democracy "makes every man forget his ancestors." Such an idea was of course attractive to an archetypal American artist like Walt Whitman, for whom culture was the enemy, evoking a literature "smelling of prince's favors . . . and built entirely [upon] the idea of caste."

Where culture is related to the past, accessibility to culture is shaped by tradition and expressed in ritual. Personal experiences and feelings are seen as idiosyncracies, irrelevant to the great chain of continuity. But when culture is concerned with the individual personality of the artist, rather than with institutions and laws, then singularity of experience becomes the chief test of what is desirable, and novelty of sensation becomes the main engine of change. Where culture is bound up with tradition, the individual strives to become cultivated. Where culture is concerned with the self, the striving is for "fulfillment" defined, as often as not, as the experiencing of sensations derived from exploring hitherto restricted areas of experience.

Modernist culture is a culture of the self par excellence. Its center is the "I" and its boundaries are defined by identity. The cult of singularity begins, as so much in modernity does, with Rousseau, who declares in the opening lines of his *Confessions*: "I am commencing an undertaking, hitherto without precedent. . . . Myself alone! I know the feelings of my heart." And indeed, this pronouncement *is* completely without precedent in literature in its assertion of absolute singularity ("I am not made like any of those in existence") and its dedication to absolute frankness ("I have neither omitted anything bad nor interpolated anything good").

Yet it would be a mistake to confuse the "I" which begins every sentence of the first page of this book with simple narcissism (though that too is there); or to view the studied effort to shock the reader with dismaying detail (". . . in agonies of death she broke wind loudly") as nothing more than a form of exhibitionism. What Rousseau was attempting in the *Confessions* was to exemplify, as ruthlessly as seemed necessary, his dictum that truth is grasped through instinct or feeling, rather than through rational judgment or abstract reasoning. "I feel, therefore I exist." Thus Rousseau's Vicar revises the axiom of Descartes and at one stroke overturns the classical definition of authenticity as well as the definition of artistic creation which flows from it.

How can one know whether an experience is "authentic"—i.e., whether it is true and therefore valid for all men? The classical tradition had always identified authenticity with authority, with mastery of craft, with knowledge of form, and with the search for perfection, whether aesthetic or moral. Such perfection could be achieved, in Santayana's words, only through "purification," though a purging away of all accidental elements—the sentimental, the pathetic, the comic, the grotesque—in the quest for that essence which signifies completeness of form. Even where art is identified with experience, as in the theories of John Dewey, the emphasis remains on completeness as a criterion of aesthetic satisfaction. For Dewey, art was a process of shaping which involved an interaction between the "directive intent" of the artist and the refractory nature of experience. The work of art was complete when the artist had achieved "internal integration and fulfillment." Art, in other words, remained a matter of pattern and structure, and

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the relationships among its separate elements had to be perceivable for a work of art to have meaning.

But the new sensibility that emerged in the 1960's scorned such definitions completely. Authenticity in a work of art was defined almost exclusively in terms of the quality of immediacy, both the immediacy of the artist's intention and the immediacy of his effect upon the viewer. In the theater, for example, spontaneity was all; the text was virtually eliminated and the reigning form became improvisation—exalting the "natural" over the contrived, sincerity over judgment, spontaneity over reflection. When Judith Malina, the director of the Living Theatre, said, "I don't want to be Antigone [onstage], I am and want to be Judith Malina," she aimed to do away with illusion in the theater, as the painters have eliminated it in art.

But to forgo the "respresentation" of another, in this instance, is not merely to forgo a text, it is to deny the commonality of human experience and to insist on a false uniqueness of personality. Antigone is a symbol—traditionally acted out on a stage spatially separated from the audience—which restates certain perennially recurrent human problems: the demands of civil obedience, the faithfulness of vows, the nature of justice. To eliminate Antigone, or deny her corporeality, is to repudiate memory and to discard the past.

Similarly, writing in the 60's was judged by its genuineness of feeling, by its success in projecting "the unvarnished imaginative impulse," and by its assertion that thought should not mediate spontaneity. Allen Ginsberg has said that he writes "to let my imagination go [to] scribble magic lines from my real mind." Two of his best-known poems, we were told over and over, were written without forethought or revision: the long first part of *Howl* was typed off in one afternoon; *Sunflower Sutra* was completed in twenty minutes, "me at my desk scribbling, Kerouac at cottage door waiting for me to finish." And in the same improvisatory manner, Jack Kerouac came to the point of typing his novels nonstop onto enormous rolls of paper—six feet per day—with never a revision.

Most of these reports from the artist's workbench were approving, for the critics of the new sensibility were hardly less personal in tone than the artists. Faced with a play, a book, or a film, their purpose seemed less to evaluate it in traditional aesthetic terms than to express themselves about it: the work served mainly as an occasion for a personal statement. Thus did each work of art, whether painting, novel, or film, become a pretext for "another" work of "art"—the critic's declaration of his *feelings* about the original work. "Action" art thus brought "action" response, and every man became his own artist. But in the process, all notion of objective judgment went by the board.

THE democratization of genius is made possible by the fact that while one can quarrel with judgments, one cannot quarrel with feelings. The emotions generated by a work either appeal to you or they don't, and no man's feelings have more authority than another man's. With the expansion of higher education, and the growth of a semi-skilled intelligentsia, moreover, a significant change has taken place in the scale of all this. Large numbers of people who might previously have been oblivious to the matter now insist on the right to participate in the artistic enterprise—not in order to cultivate their minds or sensibilities, but to "fulfill" their personalities. Both in the character of art itself and in the nature of the response to it, the concern with self takes precedence over any objective standards.

This development has not been unforeseen. Thirty years ago Karl Mannheim warned that:

> . . . the open character of democratic mass society, together with its growth in size and the tendency toward general public participation, not only produces far too many elites but also deprives these elites of the exclusiveness which they need for the sublimation of impulse. If this minimum of exclusiveness is lost, then the deliberate formulation of taste, of a guiding principle of style, becomes impossible. The new impulses, intuitions and fresh approaches to the world, if they have no time to mature in small groups, will be apprehended by the masses as mere stimuli. . . .

Other theorists of mass society like Ortega y Gasset, Karl Jaspers, Paul Tillich, Emil Lederer, and Hannah Arendt, whose writings were so influential in the 1950's, were also concerned with the social consequences of the loss of authority, the breakup of institutions, and the erosion of tradition; but their emphasis was political rather than cultural. They saw mass society as highly unstable and a prelude to the onset of totalitarianism. But while their theory about the relation of the "masses" to society seems in retrospect overly simple in its judgments about social structure and crude in its analysis of the nature of politics, it did prove startlingly relevant to one segment of society—the contemporary world of culture. What these theorists called "massification"—to use one of their clumsier terms—is now taking place in the world of the arts. Style has become synonymous with fashion, and "new" styles in art displace one another in constant and bewildering succession. The cultural institutions do not work in opposition to the present, thereby providing the necessary tension for testing the claims of the new, but surrender without struggle to the passing tides.

High art, as Hilton Kramer has observed, "has always been elitist, even if the elite was only an elite of sensibility, rather than of social position. High art requires exceptional talent, exceptional vision, exceptional training and dedication—it

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requires exceptional individuals. . . ." Such a requirement is of course repugnant to any kind of populist ideology—including the populist ideology which holds sway in present-day American culture.* Hence the haste with which so many critics have rushed to align themselves on the side of mass culture.

For the serious critic the situation poses a real dilemma. "The profession of criticism," as Hilton Kramer points out, "made its historical debut at the very moment when high art needed to be defended against a large, ignorant public for the first time." But that situation has long since changed. High art itself is in disarray, if not "decadent" (though that term has never been adequately defined); the "public" is now so culturally voracious that the avant-garde, far from needing defenders among the critics, is in the public domain. The serious critic, then, must either turn against high art itself, thereby pleasing its political enemies, or, in John Gross's phrase, "resign himself to being the doorman at the discothèque." This is the trajectory of the democratization of cultural genius.

IV

The Loss of Self

THE situation is most grave, perhaps, in the area of literature. The novel came into being some two hundred years ago, created by the sense of a world in upheaval. It was a means of reporting on the world of fact through the imagination, and the touchstone of the novel was involvement with experience—in all its variety and immediacy—refracted through the emotions and disciplined by the intellect. A novelist is, so to speak, a sample of one whose personal experiences are a kind of *ur*-experience. When he goes back into his own unconscious to scrape the burns of his psyche, he is in touch—if he is a good novelist—with the collective unconscious as well.

For the first hundred years or so of the novel's existence, the task of the novelist was to elucidate society. But that task was eventually to prove impossible. As Diana Trilling has written, in seeking to define the contemporary burden of the novelist: "For the advanced writer of our time, the self is his supreme, even sole referent. Society has no texture or business worth bothering about; it exists because it weighs upon us and because it conditions us so absolutely. . . . [The] present-day novelist undertakes only to help us define the self in relation to the world that surrounds us and threatens to overwhelm it."

This is a brilliantly accurate statement about the first half of the century; by the time we reached the 60's, however, the novelist had lost even the self as referent, as the boundaries between the self and the world grew increasingly blurred. Mary McCarthy has said that a new kind of novel, "based on statelessness," was beginning to be written at this time, and she cites as evidence the writings of Vladimir Nabokov and William Burroughs. I think this is to some extent true. In any event, writing in the mid-1960's became increasingly autistic, and the voice of the novelist grew more and more disembodied.

In reading the novelists who have touched the nerve of the age, one finds that the major preoccupation of the 60's was *madness*. When the social life has been left behind, and the self, as a bounded subject, has been dissolved, the only theme left is the theme of dissociation, and every important writer of the 60's was in one way or another involved with this theme. The novels are hallucinatory in mode; many of their protagonists are schizoid; insanity, rather than normalcy, has become the touchstone of reality. Despite all the social turmoil of the decade, not one novel by these writers was political; none (with the exception of Bellow's *Mr. Sammler's Planet*) dealt with radicalism, youth, or social movements—yet all were anagogical in one way or another. What all this adds up to in the sensibility of these writers is an apocalyptic tremor—like the swallows before a storm—that seems to warn of some impending holocaust.†

The "simplest" writers are the Black Humorists—Joseph Heller, J. P. Donleavy, Bruce Friedman, Thomas Pynchon, and, for the "pop" audience, Terry Southern. They deal with absurd and nihilistic situations, the plots are nutty and mischievous, the style cool, farcical, zany, and slapstick. In all of the situations the individual is a kind of shuttlecock, batted back and forth by the inanities of huge and impersonal institutions. In *Catch-22*—one of the most popular novels of the 60's—the protagonist cannot escape from the Air Force because by invoking a rule to show that he is mad, he proves he is really sane. It is the classical theme of folly.

In the science fiction and futurism of Anthony Burgess, Kurt Vonnegut, and William Burroughs the absurdities are heightened as the characters

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* "Ours is the first cultural epoch," Lionel Trilling has written, "in which many men aspire to high achievement in the arts and, in their frustration, form a dispossessed class which cuts across the conventional class lines, making a proletariat of the spirit." "On the Modern Element in Modern Literature," in *The Idea of the Modern*, edited by Irving Howe.

† This reading, I know, completely ignores many prominent novelists of the decade—such as Updike, Salinger, Cheever, J. F. Powers, Styron, Roth, Malamud, and Baldwin. I can only say that these men have busied themselves with the more traditional concerns of the novelist—which is to report the doings of man in a social framework, though Malamud, to be sure, has often gone off into the exploration of fantasy. Given my own sociological reading of the apocalyptic temper of the times, I feel that the novelists I have chosen are the ones making the more characteristic statements.

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undergo actual changes in their physical form. The emphasis is on the gratuitousness of events and on the blurring of good and evil. In John Barth's *Giles Goat Boy,* the world is fought over by two giant computers. In Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49,* the "plot" centers on a worldwide conspiracy—a theme that also occurs in Burroughs—and we await the end of America in an onrush of doomsday saturnalia.

Schizoid themes are made explicit in Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,* Barth's *The End of the Road,* and Mailer's *An American Dream.* In Kesey's book, parts of it written under the influence of peyote and LSD, a character fakes insanity to escape a jail term but ends up being lobotomized, while a schizoid Indian giant who has been a patient in the same hospital breaks out and "goes sane." In Mailer's *An American Dream*—with its obviously symbolic title—the protagonist Stephen Rojack acts out a variety of omnipotence fantasies—including confrontation by the CIA and other mysterious forces—and ends up by celebrating the power of thought waves to reach out to the beyond.

In the other major novelists of the period—Nabokov, Bellow, Burroughs, and Genet—the themes of fantasy predominate. Nabokov's *Pale Fire* is a kind of fantastic detective story (as well as a melodramatic, labyrinthine conceit about power, love, and learning) consisting of an elaborate commentary on a long poem by a protagonist who may be a spy or the deposed king of an imaginary country resembling Russia—the confusion of identity is crucial. *Ada* (or *Ardor,* or many other versions) is an equally complex fantasy about love, which deliberately plays with anachronism to obliterate all distinctions between past and future time.

Saul Bellow—the only writer who in the end is anti-apocalyptic—raises the question: "Was it the time . . . to blow this great, blue, white, green planet, or to be blown from it?" *Mr. Sammler's Planet* revolves, in large part, around the plan of an Indian physicist to colonize the moon as an escape from the overcrowding of the earth. Interwoven with Dr. Lal's plan is a purported memoir of the life of one of the pioneering futurists, H. G. Wells. And Mr. Sammler himself—the novel's beautifully rendered protagonist—is stateless, as though to emphasize the dissolution of all past structures.

Nabokov and Bellow are by temperament observers of the world, but with Burroughs and Genet the apocalypse is upon us. The world is literally and symbolically dismembered. In Burroughs, the excremental vision becomes tactile. Though *Naked Lunch* is ostensibly about the author's battle with drug addiction, the theme of feculence runs like an open sewer through the book: there is a great preoccupation with anality, with bodily discharges of all kinds, with a horror of the female genitalia, and a lingering upon such images as the reflexive ejaculation of a hanged man during an execution. People are turned into crabs, or huge centipedes, or carnivores. Burroughs has said that the "novelistic form is probably outmoded," and writers will have to develop more precise techniques "producing the same effect on the reader as lurid action photos." His novels—*Naked Lunch,* and the trilogy including *The Soft Machine, Nova Express,* and *The Ticket That Exploded*—are "cut-up" books: "You can cut into *Naked Lunch* at any intersection." It is a "continuous showing," for *Naked Lunch* has no use for history. The other novels are written in strips and pasted up arbitrarily. Reality has no reality, for there are no more dimensions and no more boundaries.

Similar preoccupations run through the work of Jean Genet, but his writing is above all a celebration of the underclass. As Susan Sontag has written, "Crime, sexual and social degradation, above all murder, are understood by Genet as occasions for glory." Genet sees the world of thieves, rapists, and murderers as the only honest world, for here the profoundest and most forbidden human impulses are expressed in direct, primitive terms. For Genet, fantasies of cannibalism and bodily incorporation represent the deepest truth about human desires.*

V

The Dionysian Pack

NOWHERE was the apocalyptic mood acted out more tirelessly than in that movement which called itself the "Dionysiac theater," and which regarded the acting troupe as a kind of Dionysiac pack. Its main emphasis was on spontaneity, on orgiastic release, on sensory communication, on Eastern mysticism and ritual; its intention, unlike that of the older radical theater, was not to change the ideas of the audience so much as to reconstruct the psyches of both audience and actors through joint participation in ceremonies of liberation. The movement fostered a school of theater which was anti-discipline and anti-craft, on the ground that any shaping of performers or text, any form of artifice or calculation, was "non-creative and anti-life."

In the traditional theater of the well-wrought play, there are no loose ends, no moral ambigui-

* It may seem strange to include Genet in an "American" group, and to label him a writer of the 1960's. Yet though his major writing was done in the 1940's and 1950's, the books which won Genet an American following—*Our Lady of the Flowers, The Thief's Journal,* and *Funeral Rites*—did not appear in translation until the 1960's. Burroughs, too, was writing in the 1950's, but both men emerged fully in the American consciousness only in the 1960's.

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ties, no unused bits of plot; there is always an underlying logic that guides the action to its conclusion, for the playwright wants to make a point. But the "new theater" distrusts what is orderly and condemns it as arbitrary and selective. Necessarily such a theater is not one of playwrights, for a written play is to some extent circumscribed and bounded, while the new theater wants to break open the action, to erase the distinction between spectator and stage, between audience and actor. Distrusting thought, it seeks to recapture in the theater a sense of primitive ritual.

The prototype of the new sensibility in the drama was the Living Theatre, organized by Julian Beck and Judith Malina. After traveling in Europe for several years, the troupe evolved a new style of random action and preached a form of revolutionary anarchism. In their new credo, "the theater must be set free" and "taken out into the street." In words reminiscent of Marinetti's Futuristic Manifesto, Beck launched an attack on the theater of the past:

> All forms of the theater of lies will go. . . . We don't need Shakespeare's objective wisdom, his sense of tragedy reserved only for the experience of the high-born. His ignorance of collective joy makes him useless to our time. It is important not to be seduced by the poetry. That is why Artaud says, "Burn the Texts."
>
> In fact the whole theater of the intellect will go. The theater of our century, and centuries past, is a theater whose presentation and appeal is intellectual. One leaves the theater of our time and goes and thinks. But our thinking, conditioned by our already conditioned minds, is so corrupt that it is not to be trusted. . . .

Accordingly, in *Paradise Now,* the star piece of the Living Theatre, audiences were invited to cross the footlights and join the actors onstage, while other performers wandered all through the house smoking marijuana and engaging members of the audience in conversation. Now and then one or another actor would return to the stage, strip down to a loincloth, and encourage the audience to follow his lead. The intention (seldom achieved) was to organize some sort of mass saturnalia. Finally everyone was exhorted to leave the theater, convert the police to anarchism, storm the jails, free the prisoners, stop the war, and take over the cities in the name of "the people."

IF THERE is a single avatar of the new sensibility in the theater, it is the French writer and critic Antonin Artaud, who died in 1948. Trained originally as an actor, Artaud in 1928, together with Robert Aron, founded the Théâtre Alfred Jarry, where, in the spirit of Jarry, he proceeded to exorcise the audience. Artaud believed that one had "to put an end" to the subjugation of theater to text, and to recover the notation of a kind of unique language halfway between gesture and thought. While he did not advocate cruelty or sadism in daily life, Artaud believed that the ritualized violence of his theater could serve a therapeutic function by providing the audience with a sense of release. In this respect, he is part of the large stream of post-modernists who have attacked rationality and sought to return to the primitive roots of impulse.

In the United States of the 60's, where the children of the affluent played, sometimes fatally, at revolution, and toyed, sometimes fatally, with hallucination, it was inevitable that theories like those behind Artaud's "Theater of Cruelty" would become fashionable without ever being really understood. (The "poor theater" of the Polish director Jerzy Grotowski, with its elimination of costumes, lighting, and sets, and its emphasis on suffering and death, enjoyed a similar vogue during this period, though its creator—an austere and isolated figure with a religious sense of calling—has since repudiated much of his following.) For in all the talk which went on during this period about the theater as ritual, there was a curious sense of emptiness, lack of conviction, and sheer theatricality.

Ritual, as Emile Durkheim has pointed out, depends first of all upon a clear distinction between the sacred and the profane, agreed upon by all participants in the culture. Ritual guards the portals of the sacred, and one of its functions is to preserve those taboos essential to an ongoing society through the sense of awe that ritual invokes; ritual, in other words, is a dramatized representation of sacred power. In a society which does not, however, start with this fundamental distinction between two realms of being, and which denies all notions of a hierarchy of ordered values, how can there be anything like meaningful ritual?

What the new theater called ritual devolved inevitably upon some celebration of violence. At first the violence remained within the confines of the work itself—as in the rite of exorcism in *The Blacks* in which the murder of a white man by a black is symbolically reenacted. Later, however, when the hunger for sensation had escalated into a demand for something more lifelike, Happenings gradually came to replace written plays as the chief arena for the enactment of violence. The theater only simulates life, after all, but in a Happening real blood could—and did—flow. In the "Destruction in Art" symposium, held in the Judson Church in New York in 1968, one of the participants suspended a live white chicken from the ceiling, swung it back and forth, and then snipped off its head with a pair of hedge clippers. He then placed the severed head between his legs, inside his unzippered fly, and proceeded to hammer the insides of a piano with the carcass. At the Cinémathèque in 1968, the German artist Herman Nitsch disemboweled a sheep onstage, poured the entrails and blood over a young

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girl, and nailed the carcass of the animal to a cross. At this "Happening," performers of the Orgy-Mystery Theater hurled quantities of blood and animal intestines over each other, presumably reenacting the taurobolium rite of Rome, where a sacrificial bull was slaughtered over the head of a man in a pit as part of his initiation into the Phrygian mysteries. Both these events were reported, with pictures, in the magazine *Art in America.* Another event presided over by Mr. Nitsch, involving the ritual slaughter of an animal, was featured in a front-page picture in the *Village Voice.*

Traditionally, violence has been repugnant to the intellectual as a confession of failure. In discourse, individuals resorted to force only when they had lost the power of persuasion by means of reason. So, too, in art the resort to force—in the sense of a literal reenactment of violence on the canvas, on the stage, or on the written page—signified that the artist, lacking the artistic power to suggest the emotion, was reduced to invoking the shock of it directly. But in the 1960's violence was justified not only as therapy, but as a necessary accompaniment to social change. Watching the children of the French upper bourgeoisie mouth the phrases of violence and chant from Mao's Little Red Book in Jean-Luc Godard's *La Chinoise,* one realized that a corrupt romanticism was covering some dreadful drive to murder. Similarly in Godard's *Weekend,* where a real slaughter of real animals takes place, one realized that the roots of a sinister blood-lust were being touched, not for catharsis but for kicks.

What the rhetoric of revolution permits—both in the new sensibility and the new politics—is the eradication of the line between playacting and reality, so that life (and such "revolutionary" actions as demonstrations) is played out as theater, while the craving for violence, first in the theater and then in the street demonstrations, becomes a necessary psychological drug, a form of addiction.

VI

In Place of Reason

By the end of the 60's, the new sensibility had been given a name (the counter-culture) and an ideology to go with it. The main tendency of that ideology—though it appeared in the guise of an attack on the "technocratic society"—was an attack on reason itself.*

In place of reason, we were told to give ourselves over to one form or other of pre-rational spontaneity—whether under the heading of Charles Reich's "Consciousness III," the "shamanistic vision" of Theodore Roszak, or the like. "Nothing less is required," said Mr. Roszak, one of the movement's most articulate spokesmen, "than the subversion of the scientific world view with its entrenched commitment to an egocentric and cerebral mode of consciousness. In its place, there must be a new culture in which the non-intellective capacities of personality—those capacities that take fire from visionary splendor and the experience of human communion—become the arbiters of the true, the good, and the beautiful."

Revolutionary change, we heard over and over, must embrace psyche as well as society. But when we sought clues as to what this might mean in real terms—what form this new, presumably post-revolutionary, culture might take—we were given only further exhortations to cast off the deadening weight of cognition, and further celebrations of "the shaman's rhapsodic babbling."

Do these exhortations add up to anything more than a longing for the lost gratifications of an idealized childhood? This has been the recurrent yearning of all utopian movements. What is new, however, about the present Arcadian fantasy—other than its being dressed up in the language of psychology and anthropology—is that while in the past such longings were largely rhetorical (regard only the "eupsychia" of Fourier), in the 1960's one found the fantasies and sexual demands of childhood acted out during adolescence on a mass scale unprecedented in cultural history. For what else was the demand for negation and indiscriminateness than a denial of those necessary distinctions—between sexes and among ideas—which are the mark of adulthood? What else was the youth culture of the Aquarian Age, the rock-drug dance of springtime, than the democratization of Dionysus?

* It would be a mistake and distortion to see this attack as coterminous with all radicalism. In fact, there is an older radical tradition which detests irrationalism, and a number of its adherents—Philip Rahv, Robert Brustein, Lionel Abel, Irving Howe—have in different essays attacked aspects of the new sensibility. The difficulty with many of their arguments is that intellectually and aesthetically they are all allied with modernism and accept its premises. Yet all the new sensibility has done is to carry the premises of modernism through to their logical conclusions.

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Agnon's Last Word

Robert Alter

The novelist of today . . . cannot quite believe in . . . his finite world. That is, the existence of Highbury or the Province of O—is rendered improbable, unveracious, by Buchenwald and Auschwitz, the population curve of China, and the hydrogen bomb.

—Mary McCarthy, *The Humanist in the Bathtub*

ANYONE for whom novels have mattered must surely at times be troubled by the sort of doubt Mary McCarthy raised some years ago in one of her most intelligent, and disquieting, essays, "The Fact in Fiction." In a century of scarcely imaginable historical outrages, what, after all, is one to do with a literary form so sturdily commonsensical, concerned as it traditionally has been with the realistic rendering of ordinary experience, the potential of revelation in trivia, the gossipy side of human intercourse, the petty frustrations, sordidness, or sheer banality of local scenes and personal relations? Mary McCarthy states this dilemma of the contemporary novelist with painful sharpness: "If he writes about his province, he feels its inverisimilitude; if he tries, on the other hand, to write about people who make lampshades of human skin, like the infamous Ilse Koch, he feels still more the inverisimilitude of what he is asserting."

The work of S.Y. Agnon provides an especially instructive instance of the difficulties of the novelistic imagination in engaging modern historical reality because there is such a peculiar and baffling duality in Agnon's relation to the 20th century. Stylistically, of course, he made a point of seceding from his own age, insisting on a meticulously classical Hebrew, even, for example, in the speech of a kibbutznik or the dialogue of a very contemporary lover and his mistress—a language that goes back many centuries to the formative texts of rabbinic tradition. Both early and late in his career, he sometimes chose to write about what was, literally, his province (Galicia) before its familiar forms of Jewish life were obliterated by the onslaught of modern history. Turn-of-the-century Buczacz remained a favorite setting for his shorter fiction, in his declining years occasionally inviting something like pious reminiscence, and his first big novel, *The Bridal Canopy*, takes us all the way back to a Galicia of the 18th century. Yet Agnon could not, I think, have written at all without in some way using his work to sound the abysses of modern history, for modern history constituted a ruthlessly uncompromising challenge to the validity of the language, values, and traditions from which he shaped his fiction.

As an ironist and a brilliant fabulist, he preferred to approach the menace of recent history obliquely, often displacing the raw terror of contemporary experience into various kinds of symbolic images and parabolic intimations that could be held at an intellectual distance. Thus, the book that seems to me his most original and powerful novel, *T'mol Shilshom* (*Just Yesterday*, a work that has not yet been translated into English), though conceived and written as the crematoria roared, took for its setting the distant and comparatively placid historical period of Palestine in the first decade of the century. The utter bleakness, however, of this novel's vision of man and God may be, after all, a direct response to the nightmare of the Hitler years, as Arnold Band has plausibly argued. The grotesque "dog's death" of the protagonist, described in hideous detail, is by no means a symbol of the fate of European Jewry, but it does suggest itself as an analogy, generating in the reader a sense of outrage and helpless dismay that would be appropriate responses to a senseless catastrophe that is historical, not merely individual. Agnon can produce this double effect all the more readily because one of the central impulses of *Just Yesterday* is to give the lie to theodicies, and God as an object of radical critique remains conveniently timeless. When a pious woman cries out in anguish at the end of the book, "After all, we know the Holy One's mercies are many, but why doesn't he have mercy on us?," her words, pronounced in a fictional time, *circa* 1910, resonate over an actual 1945 landscape gray with human ash and clotted with mass graves.

A novel so grim and uncompromising as *Just Yesterday* could hardly be called an evasion, but it deals with contemporary history only by indirection, while in the foreground it focuses on less apocalyptic, more manageable, processes of historical decline: the decadence and petrifaction of Orthodox Judaism, the erosion of traditional Jewish values in the new secularist milieu, the crippling disorientation of an individual cut loose

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from the moorings of the old world and unable to find himself in the new one. It remained for Agnon to attempt a direct, full-scale novelistic rendering of the contemporary Jerusalem he knew as it was gripped by the historical violence immediately surrounding it and shaken by the shockwaves of the much vaster movement of violence that swept over Europe from 1933 to 1945. This was the major task that occupied him—sometimes, one is tempted to say, as a kind of labor of Sisyphus—for the last twenty years of his life. In 1949, four years after the appearance of *Just Yesterday,* Agnon published in the *Ha-aretz Yearbook* the first chapters of a new novel, *Shira.* From 1949 to 1955 some two hundred pages of the novel appeared in the same annual publication. After that the publishing of portions of the work in progress stopped, until two more chapters appeared in 1966. Throughout this period, as one might imagine, there was a continual hum of rumor in the Israeli literary world about the scope of the novel, its ultimate direction, about whether, as Agnon occasionally hinted to visitors, an immense magnum opus lay finished in one of his drawers, awaiting the whim of the master to be revealed to the world. According to the testimony of Agnon's daughter, he set aside the manuscript after the mid-50's and then began again to work on it seriously in the last years of his life. During his final illness, he gave instructions for the manuscript to be published, indicating certain chapters in manuscript that were to be omitted, others to be included. Now, a year after Agnon's death, *Shira,* his longest novel and his most contemporary in setting and personages, has finally been published in Israel. The novel is still without an ending, and at a number of points obviously still in need of the author's editing (particularly in the overabundance of anecdotal digressions), yet with its flaws it is a compelling—at times, haunting—book that confronts directly problems Agnon was content merely to allude to elsewhere in his writing.

THE materials of *Shira* more closely resemble those of the traditional European novel than do the materials of any other long work of fiction by Agnon. The social milieu in which the action is set is the best approximation of a bourgeoisie offered by Jerusalem on the eve of World War II—the highly Germanic academic community of the Hebrew University, with its acute consciousness of rank and status, its rituals of social propriety, its squabbles and intrigues, its constant institutional fuss and bother, all seen here in a caustic, satiric light. The action itself pivots upon the most traditional of novelistic subjects, adultery, though, as I shall try to show, Agnon does some rather peculiar things with this subject. The protagonist, Manfred Herbst, a lecturer in Byzantine history, is a scholar capable of the most selfless dedication to his work, but while he endlessly accumulates notes and references and index cards for that big second book, a study of the burial of the poor in Byzantium, the book itself never materializes and his professorship remains a distant mirage. Herbst is decidedly an autumnal figure, as his German last name suggests, soul-weary from years on the academic and domestic treadmills: one is a little startled to learn near the end of the novel that he is only forty-three, which would make him perhaps barely forty when the action starts. "Action" is something of an exaggeration, since we first see Herbst and his wife Henrietta lapsing into somnolence in the reception room of a maternity ward. Herbst watches his pregnant wife doze between contractions, studying her faded, distorted features, and then he himself nods. He is awakened by the entrance of a nurse named Shira, "tall, masculine, wearing glasses that jutted out impudently in front of her eyes, making the freckles on her gray cheeks rise like nailheads in an old wall." Hardly an alluring bedmate, one would think, but within a few hours, while Henrietta, presumably, is giving birth, Herbst will find himself alone with Shira in her room where she, changed now into a light blouse and tight blue slacks, uncannily becomes a potent sexual presence and quickly moves the shy academician from caressing touch to naked embrace. The surge of guilt Herbst feels after the encounter is predictable, and so his subsequent visits to Shira are intermittent, ambivalent, driven. She on her part allows him to go to bed with her only two or three times more, choosing for inscrutable reasons to tantalize rather than satisfy him. Eventually, she disappears without a trace, leaving him his obsession with her, his violently erotic dreams, a recollected line of Hebrew verse that insistently repeats itself in his head: "Flesh like your flesh will not soon be forgotten."

This exploration of the poignancy of banal experience is very much in keeping with the traditions of the realistic novel, and the plot itself—the futile attempt to escape the aridity of bourgeois life by pursuing a will-o'-the-wisp of passion—is virtually the archetypal plot of the classical European novel. What makes *Shira* crucially different is the fact that this familiar domestic drama is enacted against the obtrusive background of a world in flames. All around Herbst and his books, wife, and mistress, Arabs are killing Jews. (These were the grim days, in the years between 1936 and 1939, of murderous assaults by Arab bands on the Jewish settlement, during which the Haganah followed the policy of *havlagah,* or non-reprisal.) A Jewish boy murdered by Arabs is mentioned on the first page of the novel, later Herbst himself is barely missed by a sniper's bullet, and painful reminders of the unending killings are repeatedly thrust upon him in a variety of ways. At a greater geographical distance, Hitler is preparing his death-camps. Jerusalem is

*The translations throughout are my own—R.A.

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flooded with refugees, many of them broken inside by the violent wrench from their old way of life. Henrietta Herbst has aged prematurely from the frantic, unavailing effort of running from office to office to obtain immigration certificates for her otherwise doomed relatives in Germany. Ironically, Herbst, the man of sedentary learning and vagrant passion, heads a household of activists—his wife trying to intercede with the authorities, one grown daughter joining a kibbutz, the other becoming a terrorist, while he, like most of the world under the shadow of apocalypse, continues to read, write, think, brood, and lust.

I have called the plot of *Shira* a "domestic drama," but in fact Agnon takes pains to emphasize the utter aimlessness of the events narrated, thus carefully destroying any dramatic urgency they might generate. The story breaks down into a series of deliberately repetitious, rudderless circlings: Herbst at his desk, hovering over his mounting stacks of notes; Herbst drifting through the streets of Jerusalem, going round and round Shira's apartment, now always locked and empty; Herbst going over and over in his mind the memory of the soft flesh that will not soon be forgotten. This quality of drift is, of course, partly a function of Herbst's indecisive character, but the narrator himself ultimately connects it with the general impact of public experience upon private life in an age of historical enormities: "Ever since the wars began coming one after the other, with killing upon killing upon murder, shrinking the value of man, the power of the moral qualities has been drained, the sting of hatred blunted, the honeyed taste of love gone, and everything follows the impulse of the moment." The comprehensiveness of this catalogue is noteworthy. All the moral qualities (*midot*), good and bad, have lost their urgency; hatred as well as love is insipid. The point is not, as in the cliché, that man has become a monster but rather that his moral life does not seem to matter to him any more in an era of global massacres. An Emma Bovary or an Anna Karenina could believe passionately and take fierce delight in her illusions; Manfred Herbst lives in a world where grand dreams are absurd, and the would-be heroic individual is no longer capable of morally challenging the accepted order of things by casting up against it an intense vision of private fulfillment. In stark contrast to the hero of the traditional novel, Herbst has no illusions at all about his mistress. He stumbles into her path quite accidentally, is attracted to her entirely by "the impulse of the moment" (*yetzer ha-sha'ah*), and afterward experiences not love but a sour and distracting erotic obsession. Even in his guilt, moreover, he wonders whether the whole affair really amounts to anything, whether moral consequentiality is not entirely a matter of convention. The "honeyed taste of love" appears once in the novel, retrospectively, when Henrietta recalls an idyllic swim in the nude with Herbst during their courtship in Berlin almost a quarter of a century earlier; but such Edenic love clearly has no place in the "war years" which are the setting for the main action of the novel.

Yet, peculiarly, there abides in Manfred Herbst's private experience, however circumscribed and frustrated, a stubbornly human value, something that at moments seems almost precious. Politics for Herbst (and, one assumes, for Agnon) is a realm of futility, unmanageable, unimaginable, inhuman. "Through politics," he bitterly announces to a young girl whose father has been murdered by Arabs, "one dies and through politics one is killed, through politics one gets sick and through politics speeches are made and shots fired." Though he has occasional misgivings about his own stance, politics is simply not a sphere with which he can deal; however insistently it impinges on him, he remains a thoroughly private person. Man as a private creature rather than a strictly political animal is impelled by three age-old drives: to seek knowledge, to make beauty, and to gratify his senses. All three of these impulses are strong in Herbst, and it is through an insight into the dynamics of their interrelation that Agnon manages to articulate in *Shira* an immensely suggestive statement about the place of fiction, and of art, in an age of endemic disaster.

At first glance, the pursuit of knowledge—and for the most part, it is the knowledge of distant antiquity—in this novel may seem merely grotesque. On occasion, the harshly sardonic satire is quite explicit: "Wechsler sits as is his wont doing his own work, classifying talismans and seals and family insignia and putting them into bags and leaving Hitler to kill and the Jews to save themselves." Now, in interpreting the harshness here, it is important to note that Agnon distinguishes crucially between the disinterested pursuit of knowledge and the exploitation of supposed knowledge for selfish ends. The academic profession here, like most professions everywhere, is filled with singleminded careerists, opportunists, and charlatans, playing all the old academic games with doctored footnotes, unacknowledged borrowings from colleagues and students, selective use of documents, and slick restatements of worn ideas. The cutting edge of Agnon's satire is directed not against the academic enterprise as such but against those manifestations of it which are really a kind of confidence game and not a pursuit of knowledge at all. Wechsler, for example—his name means "changer" or "broker"—has made a brilliant career out of the discovery and purported deciphering of a scrap of ancient leather on which appear three fragmentary letters so obscure that no one is sure whether they should be read from right to left or from left to right.

By contrast, the book repeatedly alludes to Professor Neu, Herbst's teacher in Germany, as the model of a superbly perceptive mind unswerving-

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ly devoted to the discovery of truth, and it is clearly felt in the novel that such devotion is one of the preeminently human activities, becoming in its pure state a moral achievement on its own account. Just before the point where the narrative breaks off, Herbst meets a medical researcher who had infected himself with a highly dangerous disease in order to discover a cure for it. Deeply troubled, Herbst wonders whether he and his fellow humanists would be capable of such sacrifice for the knowledge they seek, and he concludes that there are rare men like Neu who would not fail even that test. For those who can carry on the academic enterprise in such a spirit, their persistence in it even at a moment of historical cataclysm is not selfish privatism, like Wechsler's, but the affirmation of a basic value of civilization.

Agnon is concerned, however, to suggest the ultimate limits of historical knowledge, which is quite a different matter from satirizing the self-seeking practitioners of a bogus historiography. One reason for Herbst's failure to finish his book is his acutely honest sense of the tentativeness of all our knowledge of the past. A magisterial intelligence like Neu's can, after painstaking research, illuminate whole regions of the past that were previously cloaked in darkness—might Agnon have had Gershom Scholem in mind?—but nagging doubts persist about the ubiquitous necessity to work from partly suppositious evidence, incomplete documents, chains of inference, and possibly faulty hypotheses. Historical investigation, moreover, even when it is disinterested, is seen to involve a special sort of self-absorption without genuine self-knowledge. It seems to promise but never really delivers the kind of truth one needs to live with at a moment of universal mayhem. This point is clearly suggested by the very remoteness of the materials studied by these Jerusalem scholars (patristics, Byzantine history, proto-Sinaitic literary remains); and Herbst's own preoccupation with ancient practices of interment obviously suggests that the past available to historical research is, literally and figuratively, dead and buried.

Against this large sense of the limits of scholarship as a source of existential truth, imaginative literature is presented in the novel almost polemically as the alternative to the scholarly way. There is more direct discussion of the value and nature of literature here than anywhere else in Agnon's work. *Shira* completely drops the characteristic Agnon affectation of independence from the corpus of European literature: Goethe, Rilke, Stefan George, Strindberg, Balzac, Tolstoy are on the lips and minds of both the characters and the narrator; Herbst himself has been a careful student of the literary classics and is an avid reader of contemporary fiction and poetry. More than once the novel comments ironically on the multitudes that read literature for all the wrong reasons —for moral edification, for the imbibing of a grand "message," for the understanding of social problems, for the revelation of erotic mysteries, the excitement of the plot, the richness of the language, or simply to while away the time. For Herbst, on the other hand, "the essence of any book was in the power of its poetry, in the living spirit it embodied, in its imaginative power, in its truth." It is hardly accidental that this series should begin with poetry (*shira*) and end with truth (*emet*), and some clue to the concrete meaning of those large, ringing terms may be grasped if one recalls that they are the equivalent of the German *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. That, of course, is the title of the work of Goethe's old age, not a theoretical statement but an autobiography, an elaborate literary experiment in self-knowledge, a study of the making of a poet which is, incidentally, divided into four parts, like Agnon's novel. The story of Manfred Herbst also turns out, somewhat surprisingly, to be about the making of a poet. Nearly halfway through the book, the diligent historian, pondering the intrigues of the Byzantine court, is seized with the sudden realization that what he must make of them is not another article for the learned journals but a tragedy. Comically, he grabs a notebook and begins to jot down a thumbnail bibliography on tragedy: Aristotle's *Poetics,* Sophocles's *Antigone, Wilhelm Meister,* Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Schlegel, Jean Paul. One can already guess that Herbst will never actually write the tragedy, though the reasons for his failure lie less in his academic work habits than in the reticence of his moral imagination.

It is only after his involvement with Shira that Herbst conceives the idea of becoming an imaginative writer, and the reader of the novel can scarcely forget that her name means "poetry." Yet, paradoxically, Shira is the most thoroughly unpoetic of "muses," not only in her aggressive manner and her often sloppy appearance but in the open contempt she shows for literature, literati, and all lofty aestheticism. If it were not for the distracting thoughts about Shira, the narrator observes, Herbst would be able to write his tragedy (which is, of course, another kind of *shira,* of poetry). Nevertheless, it is appropriate that this harsh and elusive mistress should bear the name of poetry, for the inflaming, exacerbating relationship she offers Herbst is the gateway to the difficult world of artistic creation, a world of imperious, passionate experience, of naked confrontation with self and other, outside the rules and restrictions and protective structures of bourgeois society. *Shira* is more openly concerned with sexuality than any of Agnon's other novels because it is a study of the intimate and intricate connection between sexuality and artistic creativity, between both those terms and self-knowledge.

In this connection, it is important to note that the sexuality operating in the relationship be-

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tween Herbst and Shira and ramified in a variety of dreams and narrative insets throughout the novel is, by conventional standards, perverse. Shira's masculinity, as we have seen, is observed the moment she enters the novel, and Herbst quickly realizes that she appeals to him precisely because she vividly embodies the radical ambiguity of male and female roles and identity. When she slips out of her nurse's uniform into "man's clothing" (the blue slacks), he discovers that her womanliness is suddenly enhanced. Later, in dream and waking experience, he will encounter other women whom he confuses with men. At the feminine end of the spectrum, Lisbeth Neu, a niece of the great professor and the delicately idealized alternative to Shira in Herbst's fantasies, arouses his desire because of the shadow of downy hair on her upper lip. "Women with a faint sign of masculinity," Herbst observes of Lisbeth, "can drive us wild. Look at Shira, she seems half-man, but when you know her better you realize that no one is more womanly." In the great climactic dream that concludes Book One of the novel, the opposites of masculine and feminine, scholarship and poetry, Herbst and Shira, Shira and Lisbeth Neu, all merge phantasmagorically. Shira, in her blue slacks of the first night, appears before the scholar in a form so threatening that his teeth start to chatter and he cries out, "If you insist on living my life, you will have to turn into a man." The still-dreaming Herbst then encounters a friend from his student days, a classics major who "used to correct Wilamowitz's translations of the Greek tragedies." The two begin to talk about "the limiting of genders in language, and especially about those words which are masculine in one language and feminine in another. Herbst wanted to mention the word *poeta* as Neu interpreted it." In the final sequence of the dream, Herbst stumbles through a series of grotesque frustrations and in the end buys a silver knife as a wedding-present for the marriage of Shira to Lisbeth Neu.

All this, of course, reflects the neuroses of Manfred Herbst, but even more interesting is what it suggests about the relationship between erotic experience and art. The realm into which Shira introduces her lover is a realm where all fixed roles are denied. Herbst's bourgeois-academic milieu, by contrast, is a sphere where personal and professional roles, not to speak of rank, are utterly determined and scarcely to be questioned. The academic mind itself tends to work with a neat classroom logic that excludes the paradoxical identity of antinomies. Thus, in formal grammar masculine and feminine are mutually exclusive, though language itself, mirroring more complex human realities, presents anomalous exceptions to the rules, and a scholar of the stature of Neu is able to perceive that the Greco-Roman word for poet crucially crosses the ordinary demarcations of gender and morphology. The realm of poetry—in Agnon's Hebrew either *piyut* (masculine) or *shira* (feminine)—is a realm of the polymorphous perverse imagination, which can assume either sex, any identity, the most exalting and the most degrading of relations and activities. It is a far more dangerous, disturbing sphere of existence than the four-square world of the solid burgher, but precisely for that reason it can embrace more of the truth, though it also makes exacting demands of the individual who would attain that truth. In the world of *shira-piyut*, sex is a plunge into the unknown. In bourgeois academe, it is a utilitarian act of biological procreation: Henrietta conceives on each of the two occasions in the novel when Herbst is said to have had intercourse with her; he habitually addresses her as "Mother"; and when, at the midpoint of the novel, he presses against her in bed, desperately calling "Mother, Mother," we see that this kind of sex is an escape from experience and a return to the womb.

One highly significant detail in Herbst's dream that I have not yet commented on is his choice of a silver knife as a wedding gift for Shira and Lisbeth Neu. In the suppressed inner life of this quiet academician, there is a progressively insistent association between sex and violence. Not long after her first meeting with Herbst, Shira has a sado-masochistic encounter with a certain genteel engineer equipped with an exquisitely cunning whip. As Shira begins to report this experience to Herbst in languorous detail, she coyly challenges him: "'And you, my dear little boy, tell me, aren't you capable of hitting a woman?' Herbst, shocked, answered no, while he felt himself close to raising his hand and slapping her across the face." Later, Herbst will begin to have recurrent nightmares of rape and dismemberment. In the most significant version, Shira goes for a walk on the beach with the engineer—now a dream-surrogate for Herbst—who, deprived of his whip, is forced to flee and watch from a hiding place while Shira is stabbed and raped by Arabs, and the unforgettable "flesh like your flesh" of the line of verse, recalled in the dream, is reduced to butchered meat.

THE "political" implication of this descent into the nether self is virtually the same one that emerges from the sexual portrait of a pacifist girl in *I Am Curious (Yellow)*, though the novel is entirely free of the Swedish film's heavyhanded didacticism. Herbst, by background and temperament inclined to pacifism, has been peripherally involved in Brit Shalom, the pacifist bi-nationalist movement led by Martin Buber, Judah Magnes, and other Hebrew University figures, but he remembers another time, when he had to "wade up to the knees in blood" as a German soldier in World War I. In fact, pacifism for Jews at a time of bloody assaults against Jews is clearly seen as a suicidal retreat from history for the sake of a self-congratulatory posture of higher morality. Yet in the novel, in any

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case, Agnon is not interested in making a programmatic political statement but in penetrating human nature at a time of bewilderingly murderous politics. Herbst, the well-meaning, peace-loving *homme moyen sensuel*, proves in the depths of sexual violence pent up inside him to be profoundly implicated in the world of "killing upon killing upon murder" from which his conscious mind recoils. Thus, the psychic energies that issue in global slaughter are sounded in the novel as they pulse through a private life, the insight of art becoming a first condition for the realistic imagination of politics.

The hiatus in Herbst between unconscious and conscious self is the most essential reason for his failure to write the tragedy of which he dreams. If, as I have suggested, poetry is seen as the realm of the polymorphous perverse imagination, it also requires, paradoxically, imaginative discipline and an unblinking courage of vision, and these are beyond Herbst. Early in the novel, the scholar proudly shows to a friend a copy of the first edition of Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* which he has discovered in a used-book shop in Jerusalem. The frustration of Herbst's ambition to become a tragedian can be explained directly in terms of Nietzsche; indeed, much of *Shira* might usefully be viewed as fictional variations on themes from *The Birth of Tragedy*.* For Nietzsche, one recalls, the roots of tragedy are in the connection it maintains with that chaos of human nature and of existence which is usually masked by the institutions and psychology of life in culture. Herbst, in Nietzsche's terms, is neither an Apollonian nor a Dionysian but a Socratic type, "Socratic" culture being the falsely optimistic culture dedicated to science rather than to wisdom, to the rationalized accumulation of knowledge. The Socratic impulse, in Nietzsche's view, dominates modern Europe, making it the anti-tragic culture par excellence. The ultimate implication of *Shira*'s satire on the academic world is Nietzschean, for in the tragic vision of life, the bearded satyr is the true archetype of man and, as Nietzsche writes, "Confronted with him, the man of culture shriveled into a mendacious caricature." The real Shira of the flesh and, still more, the protean and menacing Shira of Herbst's imagination introduce the scholar to the realm of Dionysian experience. The various avatars of Shira seem "to whisper to us," as Nietzsche says of the tragic myth of the Sphinx, "that wisdom, and particularly Dionysian wisdom, is an unnatural abomination; that he who by means of his knowledge plunges nature into the abyss of destruction must also suffer the dissolution of nature in his own person." Herbst, as a would-be tragedian, must be able to contain this dissolution in Apollonian form. (His daughter sends him a postcard from Greece with a picture of Apollo and an inscription on the statue's arm, "greetings from Apollo"; comic mention is made more than once of Tchernichovsky's Nietzschean poem, "Before the Statue of Apollo," in which Apollo turns out to be Dionysus as well.) But Herbst cannot contain what he cannot confront.

*In all this, I would be inclined to suspect an ultimate indebtedness to the imaginative use of Nietzsche in the fiction of Thomas Mann, though Mann is never alluded to by Agnon and the two writers have not generally been linked by Hebrew critics.

Near the end of the novel, the historian comes to the conclusion that, "Modern poets may be experts on the ingredients of tragedy, some of them perhaps more than the early poets were, but because the ancients were believers, the creation of tragedy was granted to them." The idea is, of course, a familiar one, but it is worth trying to see the specific meanings given to this lost state of belief within the context of the novel. In the tragedies of Aeschylus and Sophocles, an inexorable principle of *diké*, or divine justice, works through the resistant medium of humanity, making possible some ultimate reconciliation at the end of the tragic agony—in terms of the literary form, making the tragic plot possible. For the moderns, who have seen "the power of the moral qualities . . . drained" by one wave of killings after another, divine justice is the most difficult of all beliefs, and so writers cannot imagine true tragedy but only, as Herbst puts it, "the narration of tragic events." More specifically, a modern intellectual like Herbst is no longer capable of absorbing the shattering impact of Dionysian return to primordial unity which, according to Nietzsche, was the basis for the tragic experience in a cult attuned to primal unities.

Since the fragmentary details of Herbst's plan for his tragic play indicate it is a projection of his obsession with Shira, one can infer that he is unable to write the play because he is finally too committed to the surface-world of his Socratic self to enter into the Dionysian depths intimated by his experience with her. In the projected tragedy, the emperor of Byzantium has designs on a young noblewoman which he plans to carry out when the pregnant empress goes into labor, thus leaving him free of her scrutiny. The parallel to Herbst's own story is clear, but the playwright has an even more important surrogate in the play, a slave named Basileios, who is the only character of the tragedy invented and not taken from history. This slave is in love with the same noblewoman the emperor desires—his predicament suggests Shira's unattainability for Herbst, the abject submission she demands of the scholar—but he contracts leprosy and is placed in quarantine outside the walls of the city. Significantly, the narrator of the novel notes that it was a tactical error for the playwright to make Basileios a leper, since Herbst was a man of delicate sensibility and could not bring himself to imagine concretely the physical appearance of leprosy, "how lepers treated one another and what their sexual practices were like."

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The difference between the occurrence of disease here and in classical tragedy is basic to the "death of tragedy" theme in the novel. *Oedipus the King* begins with a plague hanging over Thebes sent by the gods for the sins committed unknowingly by the king. When the full price of tragic suffering has been exacted, the plague will be lifted, the city purged. In Herbst's anti-tragic world, on the other hand, disease is not an instrument of divine justice but a correlative of the consciousness of guilt: it does not chastise or purge but lingers, loathesome. Herbst associates Shira (who is, of course, a nurse) with disease from the beginning of the novel. He has a recurrent hallucination of Shira enveloped in the polluted flesh of a blind beggar from Istanbul. (Istanbul, one should note, stands on the site of ancient Byzantium.) At one point, he convinces himself that he has contracted a venereal disease from her and lives for days in fear of infecting his wife and children. Nothing can be resolved through such disease because it is the image of an unhealthy soul incapable of facing its own experience squarely.* Herbst, therefore, can be neither a participant in nor a creator of tragic experience. What the art of the novel—an essentially post-tragic art, Agnon seems to imply—can do is to use such images to illuminate the condition of particular figures like Herbst, communicating a unique sense of coherence through the very act of artistic illumination.

THE novel offers one striking paradigm for the mode of communication of art, the meaning of its "poetry and truth," at a historical moment when disease has touched the inner nature of human reality. Herbst, rummaging through an upstairs room in a bookstore, comes across the reproduction of a large panoramic painting by an artist "of the school of Breughel." The subject is horrifying, and utterly mesmerizing: a leper, his eyes and hand eaten away by the disease, is ringing a bell to warn people off. Herbst is seized with the uncanny conviction that the infection emanates entirely from the bell, clear and bright at the center of the picture.

> Who painted this picture? What was the name of the master artist who was able to infuse the spirit of life into an inanimate object? The men and women of the city could barely be seen, while the image of the diseased man, his hand and bell, were visible in great clarity. Despite this, you could see that everything in the town, the men and the women and the houses and the marketplace and the well were almost entirely tranquil, without the slightest apprehension, but the sound of the bell had already started out from the bell, clanging and reverberating and moving outward from the diseased man's hand, and a great dread was drawing near. Herbst looked at the picture again, looked at the leper and his hand but not at the bell, for now he realized that the sickness could not be in the bell. All the while he avoided touching the picture as if its form had been smirched like that of a living leper. . . . At that moment it was clear to Herbst that he heard a sound emanating from the bell in the diseased man's hand proclaiming a warning, "Get away, don't touch me." Herbst observed the warning voice and did not touch the picture but he looked and looked again with terror-stricken eyes and an eager soul.

The Breughelian painting—like a few of the greatest modern novels—combines an intense quality of apocalyptic vision with painstaking, almost clinical realism in the rendering of individual detail against a large social background. At the center of vision is the uncanny bell, a visible token of the true artist's ability to focus the reality he represents, to give it formal coherence and thus significance. What the bell communicates as its presence radiates out to the limits of the scene and beyond cannot be conveyed discursively, for it is the kind of immediate insight into the nature of things available only to the artist and realizable only in his chosen medium. The corresponding immediacy of communication through the achieved work of art is of course clear in the hallucinatory way the painting becomes a living, speaking presence to its observer. The complacent burghers in the background of the painting register no response to this resonating center of disease and impending dread at the heart of their world because their deafness is itself an essential and highly realistic part of the artist's subject. The same opposition between complacent trust in a false order and probing insight into radical disorder is the central opposition of this novel, as it is of so many serious works of fiction in our century. Agnon is not, I think, suggesting a necessary association between artistic creativity and neurosis (here he differs from Mann) but rather between art and the perception of human reality—which, as a rule, involves neurosis, and in our age, often worse.† Instructively, Herbst's eyes are "terror-stricken" but his soul is "eager" to take in the painting, because the soul is avid for reality and the great artist gives us as much of it as we can bear. In a moment, Herbst will quiet his agitation by examining some Rembrandt reproductions with their "inner sadness that brings with it inner rest—the rest which is called harmony but which I call growing wise and knowing."

Clearly, the painting from the school of Breughel with its silent pulsations of disaster is the more characteristically modern, but, however different in feeling, its function as a work of art is not finally different in kind from that of the Rembrandts—to make possible through the rigorous translation of insight into formal order a true

*The parallels here with Mann's *Death in Venice* are suggestive.

† The medical researcher at the end of the novel may hint at Agnon's ideal of the artist: the healthy man who has the courage to take disease into himself in order to discover a necessary truth.

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perception of man's estate. *Shira,* then, proves to be very much an artist's personal testament, which may be why it was so difficult a book for Agnon to resolve. That may also suggest why he was hesitant about having the entire work appear in his lifetime, for it would have impaired the misleading image he liked to preserve as a writer whose fundamental points of imaginative reference were God, Torah, and Israel. In any case, *Shira,* even unfinished as it is, succeeds in being a plangent response to the modern writer's quandary about the improbability of his own province in a world of Ilse Kochs. What Agnon has done is to give that improbability a visible body by a satiric novelistic study of the figures and folkways of the province, while in the foreground, his rendering of the inner life of his protagonist hints at subterranean connections between the province and the heart of historical darkness. To place the diseased hand and the dire bell of warning at the center, the townsfolk half-glimpsed in the background, is to reverse the proportions of most traditional novels, but it makes *Shira* one of the few major works of fiction since the last world war that manages to speak knowingly from the depths of our century's grim history.

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The Young Weizmann

Chaim Raphael

WHAT kind of book tells us most about history—the straight "objective" story from A to Z, or the book with fragmentary but living echoes of the past, where the historian keeps in the background and we are free to build up our own response to the voices we hear? Something of this direct personal contact with history is offered us in the first two volumes now issued of what is to be a massive venture—the publication in twenty-six volumes of all the letters and papers of Chaim Weizmann, first President of Israel.*

It is a great conception, not merely to put everything "on the record" but to open the door in a most imaginative way to a uniquely creative period of Jewish history. The work is being carried out by a devoted band of scholars, with Meyer Weisgal (former president of the Weizmann Institute) as General Editor; and it is likely that only a man of Weisgal's relentless enthusiasm could have seized the idea—entrusted to him personally by Weizmann in 1949—with the power and vision to bring it to completion. The letters alone will fill twenty volumes; and the intention is to have them ready (and perhaps all printed) in time for the one-hundredth anniversary, in November 1974, of Weizmann's birth. The editing and the explanatory material is of the highest quality, so that we are given an intimate picture not only of Weizmann himself but of all the forces at work in that far-off world—a maelstrom of politics and aspiration, ancient faith and revolution, gentle humanities torn by pride and jealousy, a tiny, almost helpless group of idealists working night and day on wearying administrative tasks toward a triumph that they could hardly envisage.

A straight biography of Weizmann would be tailored to what was clear-cut and lasting in his achievement. It is quite a different experience to move slowly ourselves through his letters, reliving the struggles with him without foresight, sharing his passions and doubts, his strength and frailties, through words which reflect the uncertainties of the moment and the unpredictabilities of the future. If we are ever to understand the creation of the State of Israel, we have somehow to reenter the minds of a people in Eastern Europe who were not simply seeking freedom like their neighbors, but a life that would make all history come "true," with the power of a miracle. It is too facile to talk of Jewry's "age-old dream" of a Return, as if it were always waiting to be realized. For two thousand years it had been a fantasy: suddenly it was put on the map of reality. Many men and women of widely different talents played essential roles: Weizmann's own part was unique, reflecting at every turn a special amalgam of intellect and feeling. The strange thing is that the more his *personal* quality is exposed, the more it becomes symbolic of Jewish existence in general. One begins to understand what is meant by Sir Isaiah Berlin's oft-quoted remark that the State of Israel was created in Weizmann's image. A man of the rarest quality, born to lead and command, he drew ultimately, and quite simply, on the authority of his feeling as a Jew; the "Western man," liberated and fulfilled, was still at one, as Israel even today is, with the subtle complexities of the Russian-Jewish tradition.

The period covered by these early volumes (the second goes only to August 1903), has a specially intriguing flavor. Later we shall meet Weizmann the leader, the diplomat, the celebrity. Here, mostly in his mid-twenties, Weizmann is still in the wings, a young chemist, desperately poor, passionately excited by the vision which fills him of a Jewish rebirth, tormented by the conflicting pressures of his Zionist and scientific work, full of complaint—as a young man has to be—at the crass stupidity or vulgarity of those in power. His *heart* is open to all his people: his *mind* and tastes link him with a tiny band of friends, intellectuals like himself. He falls in love, which creates its own crisis, though ultimately brings a special kind of blessing. To his family, his fiancée, and his comrades he is warm, spontaneous, affectionate. To others he might seem impetuous, demanding. He reveres Herzl, but is trying to formulate a different kind of Zionism. A home in Palestine has to be more than a refuge, but as yet he can't define its full range. He speaks of culture and technology, the role of a Jewish university, the value of developing practical colonization in Palestine, the democratic participation of the masses (as distinct from merely diplomatic activity), the bridge that has to be built between the inward-looking Jews of Eastern Europe and the sophisticated Western world. Zionism has to make all this possible—to bring out all dormant feelings, to synthesize every-

CHAIM RAPHAEL, *Research Fellow at the University of Sussex, contributed "In Search of Cecil Roth" to our September 1970 number.*

* *The Letters and Papers of Chaim Weizmann*, General Editor, Meyer W. Weisgal. *Letters*, Volume I, edited by Leonard Stein in collaboration with Gedalia Yogev (London, Oxford University Press, 1968, 447 pp.); *Letters*, Volume II, edited by Barnet Litvinoff, editorial direction, Gedalia Yogev (London, Oxford University Press, 1971, 489 pp.). Distributed in the United States by Oxford University Press, Volume I, $10.25; Volume II, $12.75.

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thing in a great sweep forward. Anything less, any weakness, any compromise is to be resisted.

These are the themes, but, as with a program note for a concert, the music itself has to be heard for the analysis to have meaning. For the most part Weizmann was writing in these letters about practical affairs—organizing, stimulating, criticizing, pleading, sometimes gently, sometimes bitterly; yet it was all shaped by the vision he had in him of a future for the Jewish people that would express a buried beauty waiting to be released. Suffering, weakness, distortion, narrow-mindedness—these were burdens that had to be transmuted through the expression of this new positive "natural" feeling. A solution that called for disappearance was not merely impracticable: it was degradation—a cowardly denial of something instinctive to every Jew who wanted to be a free human being.

THE issue of disappearance is one which has haunted argument whenever liberalism or revolution have seemed to offer Jews a way out of the discrimination or narrowness of their lives. In the Europe of Weizmann's youth it was a battle fought with particular intensity. In the background he came from there could be no easy watering-down of differences between the Jew and his neighbor. The Jewish masses of Central and Eastern Europe were not to be freed of the rigid separatism of their lives without cataclysmic disturbance. Jewish attachments were so deep that they would either have to be deliberately smothered, or given new "living" expression. The Communists looked to the first solution, the Zionists to the other, with many Jews holding intervening or overlapping positions, and with all views locked in desperate battle.

It was a period of turmoil, with many foreshadowings of the future. On the surface, things might look promising. The old empires in which the Jews lived were disintegrating, with liberalism and new nationalisms on the march. But many Jews looking hopefully in these directions were discovering that the growth of liberalism, in this background, had a dark underside. To the relentless defenders of *anciens régimes* the Jews were ever-available scapegoats for the diversion of unrest, so that organized pogroms actually increased. To the newly emerging nationalisms, the Jews were felt to be outsiders even more than had been the case under the more pluralistic empires. The full-hearted participation of young Jews in nationalist and revolutionary movements was no guarantee of acceptance. The more the Jew broke through the ghetto into the professions, the academic world, trade, and industry, or into active political participation, the more visible he became, and the more was his desire to coexist, or assimilate, resented by bigots and rivals.

To the young Weizmann, as revealed in these early letters, the message was crystal clear. Liberalism and democracy were legitimate aims for man; but to expect the achievement of these goals to result in a self-respecting future for Jews in any part of what was then the Russian Empire was to ignore the lessons of history. Nor was mankind to be transformed through some form of Marxian revolution. The revolution had to be inward: the strength of the Jews had to be canalized into a rebirth of pride, linked with their tradition. Weizmann fought for these ideas among the Jewish students pursuing their higher education, like himself, in lands adjacent to Russia. With the certainty he had that the Marxist approach was corrupt *intellectually*, he showed at the same time a deep contempt for the *attitude* it produced, which he regarded as morally bankrupt.

In Geneva, particularly, exiled Russian Communist and socialist leaders exercised an influence on Jewish students which Weizmann tried to offset, debating directly with the great Plekhanov and others. He is very disturbed, he writes in one letter, at the "pernicious effect" that Plekhanov ("the General of the Russian Revolution," he calls him) is having:

> I confess that I am not filled with respect for these representatives of social conscience and social justice. . . .[Their socialism] is merely an *Ausfluss* of their own insignificance and individual weakness: they need a crowd to hide behind it, not to educate it. . . . Only bitterness and similar negative motives drive our semi-Jewish youth here into the socialist camp, and on the whole they bring to socialism the elements of corruption and ferment. . . . This is why they cannot be Zionists. . . . They are lackeys, and lackeys in socialism cannot understand the boldness and the great cultural and ethical significance of the idea of the liberation of Jewry.

He was just as angry—perhaps even more angry—at those Jewish socialists in the Bund who, while they kept an intense Jewish pride and identity centered around Yiddish, opposed Zionism fiercely and saw a future through participation in Russian politics. They were the most effective competitors for youth and the workers, and there was something almost frenetic in Weizmann's attempt to fight them. As he saw it, "Bundism" could only lead to "a degenerate, vicious assimilation." One debate with them that we are told of, in Berne, lasted for three nights. Life was an endless round of speeches and debates, interspersed with missions throughout Western Europe to establish committees and raise funds for the practical work he was trying to further. A special aim at this period was to lay the foundations for the establishment of some kind of Jewish university or technical college in Palestine (or even in Europe) that would start the long-term job of bringing the emerging Jews into Western life, while reinforcing their Jewish pride.

It is indeed partly due to this endless traveling that so many letters have survived from this period to document Weizmann's thoughts. In the first volume, a large part of the letters are those he wrote to his fiancée, Vera, almost from the day they met. She kept them all. At one level they are affectionate—and sometimes passionate—love-letters; but they also describe what he was doing from day to day when they were separated. She was from a very different Russian-Jewish background, but was soon part of his intimate family and student group. At critical moments, as these letters show, she kept him from what would

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have been a fatal decision—to give up science in order to devote all his time to Zionism. The double strain was at times crippling, but somehow he survived, with the result that as a Zionist leader in later years he was fortified by his stature as a chemist and by the financial independence which his discoveries gave him.

The other lucky chance which preserved so many letters from this early period was that for a time Weizmann was running an office—virtually single-handedly—in Geneva to further his plan for the university (organizing questionnaires on student numbers, collecting funds, and founding societies), linking this with his work for the small Zionist party (the "Democratic Fraction") which he and his friends had founded, and pushing ahead strenuously with a plan to publish a periodical *(Der Jude)* to express all these ideas. His office had not yet acquired a typewriter and carbon paper, but Weizmann made copies of his letters on what was then called a "press-book," from which we can see (albeit with gaps) the great range of his Zionist work—utterly exhausting, it proved—in the midst of his scientific teaching and research.

At this stage, much of his Zionist work seemed doomed to failure. The university, despite all his efforts, remained just an idea. The periodical had to be abandoned just when it was due to appear: the Kishinev pogrom massacre (Passover 1903) had erupted on the scene, absorbing all attention and funds. The party work never caught fire. It had been started by a few young people like himself (notably Berthold Feiwel and Martin Buber) to give value to the spiritual teachings of Ahad Ha'am and to pinpoint some of the things they felt wrong with the movement—the "aloofness" of the great Herzl to the "living" ideas of the youth, and the power he gave (without understanding the dangers) to the Mizrahi (religious) party. Herzl was suspicious of the Fraction from the start. There was a flaming row *over an uncompromising critique*, published by Ahad Ha'am, of Herzl's novel *Altneuland*. The Fraction was attacked by the Russian authorities as socialist (to Weizmann's horror!). Weizmann had to write to Herzl declaring his loyalty and pleading with him to take no notice of all the scurrilous rumors being circulated.

YET despite all these setbacks, the work went on, touched at many points with the humor and affection of friendship, and illumined by the analytical power which Weizmann applied to the problems which seemed central to the future. Even in the short period covered so far in the letters, one sees the leader beginning to emerge. At twenty-one, the jollities of student life crop up, with everything else depressing him utterly. At this stage he was still studying in Berlin. Back home in "God-forsaken" Pinsk, he beseeches his friend Leo Motzkin for news:

> What's happening in the *Verein* [debating society]? Have you written your paper on anti-Semitism? . . . I am incredibly bored here and have not taken up at all with the *jeunesse dorée* of Pinsk. . . . We have managed to found a literary circle . . . but our members do not really understand nationalism. . . . There is a depressed dull state of mind everywhere. . . . The monotony is only broken occasionally when one indulges in indignation at the emptiness and nastiness of our leading Jews. . . .
>
> Never mind, it will be merrier soon in Berlin. Everyone will assemble there and we shall start a good life again. . . . You will absolutely have to initiate me into the mysteries of mathematics: this is indispensable to me for my future progress. . . .

As his Zionist work grows, he finds it harder and harder to hide his despair:

> There are so many enemies on all sides, so many attacks, and all this has to be fought off. . . . Will our [Congress] delegates have enough energy and courage to rise to the height of the task. . . . Shall we succeed in attaining peace in Zionism and doing away with *Bruderkrieg*. . . . I am going to Basle with a heavy heart. . . .

"We are universally betrayed," he writes to another correspondent, "and so the faithful few have to slave all the harder."

But while his letters continue to lament the problems, he is tireless in defining the positive aims which lie behind the most boring of administrative tasks. The questionnaires on Jewish students—he tells a correspondent in Saratov—have helped to bring a whole movement (for the university) into existence. He warns against amateurism, which would make it into "a half-baked project." To a correspondent in Kharkov, in despair at opposition, he says:

> A long time will have to elapse before better, stronger creative forces arise in Judaism. Until then we are the ones who are called upon to keep watch. . . . We are now at the beginning of a difficult but glorious endeavor. I persist in my unshakable conviction that our ability will match our aspiration. . . . Do all you can—even more—shake the people out of their slumber, heap scorn on them, tell them the truth, the whole truth. . . .

To another correspondent, in Geneva, he talks of the value of the proposed periodical ("it will make Jews out of these semi-people"); and if the university project is added: "Such projects create a force and are themselves given propulsion by that force." To friends in Moscow he is frank about the role of their Democratic Fraction:

> It has become quite clear to me that we ourselves are not a group of democrats, but rather *l'intellectuelle dans le sionisme*, if one may use the term. This does not exclude the democratic process in our activities among the broad mass of people. . . . [Our paper] must be a golden bridge on which the intellectuals of Europe will meet with our Jews. . . . It must be an Elite-Organ. . . .

To Menahem Ussishkin, already an established figure, he expounds the leadership principle in greater detail. In Russia itself, he says, there is no possibility of creating a stable force, "for everything is built on a volcano." They must create "a cadre, which would take all activity into its hands." Groups would go to England, America, and Galicia to rally support:

> The rallying theme must be a nationalization of emigration,

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and the unification of the *Golus* in its entirety through Zionism. . . . This order of "missionaries" must encompass a maximum purpose from the outset. . . . I shall probably begin my tour around the world as early as this summer [1903]. I want to see Jews wherever they are. . . .

But the most remarkable letter is a long memorandum to Herzl, covering twenty-two pages of Volume II, analyzing the complex relationship between Russia and the Jews, and drawing conclusions—almost in prophetic form—for the Zionist struggle. The political aim of the letter was to arouse Herzl to the dangers ahead if Jewish clericalism (in the form of the Mizrahi party) was allowed to keep its dominant hold on the movement. At the same time Weizmann gives full rein to his long-held feeling that any reliance by Russian Jews on socialist or Communist messianism would be self-deluding for them and tragic for the Jewish people. He pleads with Herzl to allow more room in the movement for his own "young" group through which Zionism could unite the Jewish people of all ages and outlooks.

The great mass of young Jews in Russia, he says, are anti-Zionist, "not from a desire to assimilate but through revolutionary conviction." Hundreds of thousands (mostly very young) had been arrested, "offering themselves for sacrifice as though seized by a fever." Zionism in its present form made no appeal because its two main elements were equally abhorrent to them: at one end, the powerful Mizrahists, expressing a medievalism that they detested; at the other end, the equally repellent "petit-bourgeois" Zionists.

If the youth of Russia were to be saved for the Jewish people, the ideas of the Democratic Fraction could be the means:

> It alone is capable of assuming the struggle against the revolutionaries. It alone is freedom-loving and socially enlightened. It extracts the Jewish essence from among the masses and pours it into a European mould.

Looking further ahead, he sees that Russia, though the "natural" base of mass Jewry at the time, cannot be relied on. The Jewries of other countries must be given an organic role, for in this way alone will the Zionist idea be given a lasting base from which to work.

There is a footnote in the book summarizing Herzl's reply. The sweep of Weizmann's argument left him, it seems, untouched, and he concentrates on the "divisiveness" which, as he sees it, Weizmann's group had introduced into the movement.

To understand the Weizmann of this period, one should look at the revealing photograph which appears opposite page 1 of Volume I, showing him as dark, gaunt, even haggard, with a scruffy, unruly beard and deepset, troubled eyes. For later years there is the more familiar picture (as painted by an English society painter in 1934) which appears on the jacket, in which his face is rounded, trim-bearded, assured, fulfilled—wise and warm. But it is the earlier picture and the letters of that period which tell us more, and particularly how we are to understand the dictum that Israel was "created in his image."

On the surface it is perplexing. The Israel of today seems in many ways far removed from the extremely personal blend of tastes and instincts which motivated Weizmann. The state came into existence (and has survived) through a form of militarism, daring, and violence which was entirely alien to him. The socialist idealism which was an essential element in the Zionism of the masses and became so powerful in the growth of Israel left him cold. The clericalism which he deeply disliked also took hold and grew. The petit-bourgeois mentality which always inspired contempt in him wherever he observed it is the other element visible everywhere, and often in the German and American forms which he found so distasteful. He was in fact a difficult, autocratic man, as these letters show, with an inborn air of superiority which was to fit him well when he moved among the potentates of the world but would obviously be much less suited to the rough and tumble of a small, bustling, precarious state.

Yet he expressed the soul of this state in its true historic sense. It was because he reached back to Jewish roots that he had no patience for anything "external"—say, socialism—that might be divergent. This completely free man—a proud leader, a scientist, a sophisticated man of the world—was still ultimately a Jew of the tradition: and it was this sense of unity with the ages that gave him his distinction.

To understand him, then, one has to turn back to the early photograph and think of the Weizmann whose sole consuming passion was to give the people of his childhood a future of self-respect. Herzl had towered over the scene, but without this living source. Before him, Moses Hess—moving on from Communism—had seen the Jewish role in history, symbolized in "Jerusalem," as part of the cosmic process. With Weizmann it was simpler and deeper. He had been drawn into Zionism not by theory but through his complete personal and moral identification with the Jews of Eastern Europe. In the poverty and crudity of life in the Pale there was warmth and love—emotions that rang true, linked to faith and decency. There was often an underlying nastiness in Jewish life, too, but this was a function of the dreadful conditions to which the Jews had been subjected. The true tradition was sacred—not metaphysically, but in terms of the human beings to whom it was instinctive. One had to rescue the millions, and the key to it was to keep alive, and foster, the feeling of the Jews as a people.

By this criterion, the mere existence of Israel fulfills the vision; but it fulfills it also in the underlying spirit which sets Israel apart when the more obvious elements—jingoism, militarism, clericalism, capitalism, and 20th-century brashness—have been paraded for inspection. From one angle, the Israelis are a new people who have broken the shackles of the ghetto; from another, they go on looking like old-fashioned Jews, harking back to the pieties, the subtleties, and the humanities of their ancient tradition. They are prepared to fight, and are good at it; but war is something they hate. They are

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individualistic, ambitious, unruly; but behind it all is a family feeling of unity which can transcend everything. They have created a new agricultural and industrial society; but their highest good is still the worship of learning. They absorb from every nation and remain distinct.

If "the Jewish spirit" is ultimately indefinable, one can recognize it in action, and everyone felt it in the character of Weizmann. Where other leaders were great orators, Weizmann spoke to his people intimately, in their own language, with a quiet wit and tenderness that reached into their hearts. If he communicated an unshakable faith, it had no bombast, but was subtle and self-questioning, empirical as well as imaginative. In the turmoil of politics and warfare, others made their mark through force and daring; Weizmann became more remote. But the qualities he embodied—his realism, his respect for intelligence, his humanism—continue to be reborn. There was a weariness about him in his later years—a sense that man has still a long way to go—which survives as a permanent echo of the ancient faith. Unseen, his image is as potent in Israel today as in his early letters.

Movies

Rio Lobotomy

William S. Pechter

ANDRE HODEIR, the French music critic, once wrote an essay entitled "Why Do They Age So Badly?" on the all but universal artistic decline of good and even great veteran jazzmen. The title invites, even demands, appropriation for a piece on film directors. For, with something like the invariability Hodeir noted, good and even very good directors seem, like jazz musicians, to do their best work first. The difference is that a Lester Young or Roy Eldridge haven't the benefit of a corps of "critics" armed with "theories" to hail their later lapses from creativity as "maturity," and pay tribute to their "authorship" and ability to produce "personal" works.

Rio Lobo is Howard Hawks's forty-third film, and its author is now seventy-five. It is, in the worst possible way, a personal film, the director even obliging his critics by having his name appear in the credits in signature. The characters and situations which have been the staple of Hawks's later films are once again insistently repeated—not varied or elaborated or reimagined as recurring elements are in the work of John Ford, but repeated, with a kind of mulish intransigence that can come to seem almost admirable (as it can seem in the writing of Hawks's chief exponent, Manny Farber). After a vigorous prologue depicting a train robbery (filmed, to judge from the clubfootedness of what follows, by Yakima Canutt, the second-unit director, famed for such action sequences as the chariot race in *Ben Hur*), we are given again the all-man John Wayne hero, flustered only by finding a fainting female in his arms, and the familiar group of adventurers which gathers around him: the callow but daring youths, the grizzled old-timer, the girls who are continually told they're "not going along" to face whatever danger must be overcome but who eventually gain admittance to the charmed circle by proving themselves just one of the boys. What one has, in short, is the preadolescent male gang, jocular in the face of danger, grudgingly infiltrated by a few tomboys who occasionally forget themselves and perpetrate a little female-aggressor sex; e.g., in *Hatari!*, the ingénue teaching John Wayne how to kiss. But such hanky-panky follows only after the girl is coached by one of the hero's equally infatuated male buddies on how Wayne is to be wooed.

Now what Manny Farber knows, as does virtually no other Hawks-hawker (and by now this includes the writers for the New York *Times*), is that it is not upon such personal trademarks that the director's claims to eminence depend; rather, I would say, it is just such things which imperil them. What Hawks had, at his best, was

WILLIAM S. PECHTER *writes on movies regularly in these pages and his book of film criticism,* Twenty-Four Times a Second, *has recently been published by Harper & Row.*

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a lean, hard, uncluttered, straight-ahead style and a sense of timing that resulted, on one hand, in comedies as sharp as *Bringing Up Baby* and *His Girl Friday*, the latter perhaps the fastest and funniest (and most cruel) of the screwball comedies of the 30's, and in thrillers as witty as *The Big Sleep*, on the other. Which is to say that Hawks, by reputation our foremost "action director," and sentimentally venerated in some quarters as the leading producer of fodder for the grind-house trade, is responsible for creating some of the American film's most brilliant and sophisticated entertainments (and I use the word "entertainments" unpejoratively); moreover, unlike such quondam action directors as Ford and Wellman, Hawks has never succumbed to the temptation of artistic pretentiousness. These three aforementioned films alone would be enough on which to base a reputation, but to them can be added others including *Scarface*, *Twentieth Century*, parts of *Red River* and *To Have and Have Not*, and, very likely, at least some of the highly touted action films of the early 30's with which I'm unfamiliar: *The Crowd Roars*, *Tiger Shark*, *Ceiling Zero*.

Yet even in his best days Hawks was making "personal" films—the 1939 trash masterpiece, *Only Angels Have Wings*, made just before *His Girl Friday*, is already a full-blown anticipation of the ethos of the boyish gang and of the dregs of *Hatari!*—and even in his best films there is the same insistent preoccupation with passive-aggressive sexual role-reversals and with such Hawksian motifs as the man-chasing woman (*Bringing Up Baby*, *The Big Sleep*) and tomboy heroine (*His Girl Friday*, in which *The Front Page* was rewritten to make a principal male character female). (Hawks is, after all, the man who can claim credit for the discovery of Lauren Bacall, that most androgynous of screen sirens, with her singing voice in *To Have and Have Not* dubbed by a young Andy Williams.) Not that such things appear *only* in his best films, as the great humor found in having Cary Grant in drag in WAC's uniform in *I Was a Male War Bride* can serve to remind one. And if one has one's doubts about the growing tendency to find humor in violence and killing in the later films, *The Big Sky* of 1952 certainly sets a clear precedent in its scene of an amputation without anesthetic played for comedy, as does much of *Scarface*. What is new, and *could* perhaps be considered variation and elaboration, is the way, in *Rio Lobo*, the violence has become increasingly kinky (a hornets' nest tossed like a hand grenade into a group of men, a young girl's face slashed, one of the villains set afire, another having a gun explode in his face) and is rather lovingly dwelt on; and the way the veteran sidekick of *Rio Bravo* and *El Dorado* has turned into Jack Elam's gleefully kill-crazy, sinister old man.

Andrew Sarris has somewhere remarked (I think wrongly) on the loss of iconic stature suffered by Humphrey Bogart in the films of Huston compared with those Bogart made with Hawks; an observation which might well be turned around to apply to the diminished stature of John Wayne in Hawks's films compared with those Wayne made with Ford. What is, I think, embarrassingly clear, as increasingly younger girls pursue an increasingly aging, passive Wayne is the extent to which the star has become a stand-in in the fantasy life of the director, as the films themselves have come increasingly to offer a field day for clinicians.* (And though one may admire Hawks's ability to turn up unknown, pretty young things looking fresh from the high-school play, their virtues tend to be rather eclipsed by the effect of their performances in such films as *Red Line 7000*, *El Dorado*, and *Rio Lobo*—as do those of the young males, James Caan excepted—which is like nothing so much as an exercise in foreign tongue with transliterated text, or, at the most expressive, a sight-reading in a second language. Yet anyone who can cast such drugstore cowboys as Dean Martin and Ricky Nelson in a period Western already has a lot to answer for.)

It is not, of course, the fact of the films embodying the director's fantasies that diminishes Wayne's stature and that of the films; the films of Chaplin and Keaton certainly have roots that run at least as deep into their creators' psychic lives. But while such elements enrich the work of Chaplin and Keaton, what one sees in Hawks's films of the last twenty-odd years are increasingly static and senile versions of the same juvenile fantasy, endlessly reenacted. And as such "personal" elements increasingly take over the work of their "author," those qualities from which his earlier work's brilliance derived shrink and shrivel ever smaller. Can this really be the work of the director of films as sexually sophisticated (however idiosyncratic) as *Bringing Up Baby* and *The Big Sleep*, one asks oneself as one cringingly averts one's eyes from the sickening coyness of the scenes of sexual byplay in *Hatari!*, *Man's Favorite Sport?*, *Rio Bravo*, *El Dorado*, *Rio Lobo*? Can this really be the work of a director whose style at its best was one of the genuine glories of the American screen, hard and lean, one asks as one watches the scenes of his later films sink ever deeper into the flaccid folds of their own lard?

MUCH as it used to be a custom among the New York tabloids to compete for quotable copy on the latest racy film by coining endless variants on the formula of "It makes *I Am Curious* look like *Little Women*," so is it a ploy among highbrow critics to single out one or another new Truffaut film as the director's "best since *Jules and Jim*." A difference is that there is often a real emotional investment in the latter activity; Truffaut's early work inspired a very deep and singular affection among its enthusiasts (and I include myself among these), and people really want each new film to recapture the former magic. One did not simply admire *Shoot*

* For an intelligent, quite sympathetic discussion of the almost pathological strangeness of late Hawks, and one of the few really interesting and reasonable things written on the director, I strongly recommend a library search for "Hawks at 70," by James Stoller, in *Moviegoer* No. 3, Summer 1966.

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the Piano Player and *Jules and Jim*; one loved and was enchanted by them; and people who wouldn't be caught dead listening to a movie soundtrack record will play Jeanne Moreau singing the song from *Jules and Jim* for intimate company.

And yet, as Lorenz Hart observed, unrequited love's a bore; or, at least, can seem so when faced with a soporific like *The Wild Child*. My own vote, half-hearted and decidedly in the minority, for Truffaut's best film since *Jules and Jim* would probably be for *The Mississippi Mermaid*, an interesting failure; though, to speak precisely, one should start keeping score not from *Jules and Jim* but from Truffaut's crystalline lyric to unrequited love made as a contribution to the omnibus film, *Love at Twenty*, which followed *Jules and Jim*, and is every bit as good as its exuberant predecessors. But it is becoming increasingly difficult not to see what follows, including even a work so admirable in many ways as *The Soft Skin*, as anything but a classic case of an artist exhausting his creative inspiration in his earliest works, works one suspects to have gestated for years in his imagination before his having had an opportunity actually to film them; and harder and harder not to see the work which follows as a species of critic's film, willed and arid; even the early work's technical brio and audacity quickly disappear, and the sudden shift from the intoxication of *Jules and Jim* (and *Love at Twenty*) to the rather too self-conscious sobriety of *The Soft Skin* is really quite remarkable. Thus the exercises in Hitchcock, as far from an understanding of what is to be prized in that director as is Truffaut's book-length interview with him. It is perhaps some index of the kind of bind in which Truffaut comes to find himself that the best thing in *The Bride Wore Black*, the rounded creation of the character of the lonely, mild-mannered bachelor whom Moreau "executes," is moving in a way that is quite beyond Hitchcock's range and distinctively within Truffaut's, and yet, in context, is noteworthy chiefly for the way it goes against the grain of what is being strived for and undercuts the attempt at manipulative "suspense." Unlike *Farenheit 451* and *The Bride Wore Black*, *The Mississippi Mermaid* at least begins to suggest some sort of justification for depriving the thriller form of its conventional satisfactions in the attempt to extend it into something more serious; but the attempt aborts, in part on very Hitchcockian grounds: in the casting, presumably for box-office insurance, of two "stars" far too glamorous to convey convincingly the sense of sexual privation and obsessive entanglement that the characters' motivation calls for. After this failure, it is *The Wild Child*, the very model of that cinema of gentility which Truffaut started as a critic by denouncing.

The Wild Child, probably the biggest vote-getter in the Truffaut's-best-film-since sweepstakes, had seemed to me a true dead end, an impersonal and edifying bore of the kind "enlightened" parents traditionally inflict on children, in which the values of civilization and the life of the mind are treated with all the tepid piety, the lack of passion, one sees in the old-maidish librarianlike celebration of bookishness at the end of *Farenheit 451*. And yet here now is Truffaut bouncing back with *Bed and Board*, a film as skilled and as consistently enjoyable as any he's made since you know what. I don't, in fact, see how anyone could fail to enjoy it. There's something for everyone: laughter, tears (pleasantly sad but not painful), sight gags, one-liners, running jokes with well-timed punchlines, a cute baby, a winning hero, and two girls to choose between, a smashing Occidental and a sensational Oriental. And Paris; Paris in (lovely) color; and French people. Indeed, the courtyard above which hero and heroine reside is so adroitly choreographed for the ceaseless flow of colorful character that one continually half-expects to see Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron dance by. Who could fail to be charmed? It is all so unerringly programmed to charm that it's only when one stops to think afterward that it was made by the man who once made films as richly textured and infinitely suggestive as *Shoot the Piano Player* and *Jules and Jim* that one has reason to demur.

FOR ME, the really disturbing thing about *Bed and Board* was just how much I liked it, at least while it was happening; more, for instance, than *Stolen Kisses*, whose attempts to be merely ingratiating and to amuse keep stumbling over the remnants of a subject and a theme—the perpetual cycle of unrequited love, of failed contact, missed connections—half-buried by charm, to be sure, but still disconcertingly there. But there is nothing of the sort in Truffaut's latest; even the closing shot in stop-motion that was so stunning in *The 400 Blows* has been increased to three and reduced to mere ornamentation. *Bed and Board* is nothing but an entertainment, and here I do use the word "entertainment" pejoratively. Truffaut and Hawks don't have much in common, except that it was Truffaut's promulgation, while writing in *Cahiers du Cinéma*, of the *politique des auteurs*, of the primacy of "personal" films, that has provided the basis for Hawks's currently inflated reputation (other than for Manny Farber, who despises Truffaut in direct proportion to his admiration for Hawks). That, in such different ways, they both should have aged so badly is, I'm sure, the merest of coincidence, and, if there's a moral in it, I'm not sure what it is unless it's that, when writing "*auteur* criticism" no less than when making films about regression to childhood (*vide* Hawks's *Monkey Business*), what one reveals has chiefly to do with one's self; that, and the fact that one man's wisdom is another's folly. Truffaut now makes expert, impersonal entertainments, and everything that was of interest in what one thinks of as a Truffaut film has drained out of them. Hawks, who now makes personal films of a clinical interest only, once made *His Girl Friday* (which I admire no less than I do *Jules and Jim*), and could never have made its like without keeping his "personality" rigorously in rein by his intelligence, tact, and artistic control.

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Against the Evidence

MILITARY JUSTICE IS TO JUSTICE AS MILITARY MUSIC IS TO MUSIC. By ROBERT SHERRILL. *Harper & Row. 234 pp. $6.95. (Revised edition, paperback, 240 pp., $1.95.)*

Reviewed by
JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR.

THE uproar about the court-martial of Lieutenant Calley—an uncomplicated conviction of premeditated murder on evidence which fully supported the verdict—shows the depth of the public's interest, and also of its ignorance, in matters of military justice. The interest is fully justified: Here is a system of criminal law affecting more than three million Americans, and one which differs in many ways, some important, from civilian justice. Moreover, as a practical matter, a court-martial is the *only* court which could have tried such a crime as Calley's—which, incidentally, the United States was bound by treaty to "bring before its own courts."

I am afraid that the ignorance also is at least excusable. I look to see what book on the subject is most likely to be read by non-lawyers, and I find Robert Sherrill's *Military Justice Is to Justice as Military Music Is to Music,* published in 1970 and recently reprinted (with minor revisions) as a paperback. It has been very widely reviewed, almost invariably with unstinting and unqualified praise. It has been accepted at face value by eminent politicians like Senator McGovern. Mr. Sherrill's contribution to public information and understanding thus deserves careful examination.*

Mr. Sherrill's specialty is ascending Pisgah-heights of moral indignation and from them preaching to the assembled multitude. This book, a polemic against military justice and the armed services generally, allows the fullest scope to his peculiar talents. At an early point (pp. 26-27), to select an entirely typical specimen of his technique of controversy, he describes a "cruel exchange" during a court-martial, in which the prosecutor, Captain Stephen J. Carlotti, "forced a psychiatrist to say on the witness stand, in front of [the accused], what was quite apparent from the evidence and did not need to be said—that the boy's mother was a prostitute." This, says Mr. Sherrill, soaring beyond moral indignation into moral outrage, "perfectly illustrates how the Army uses its court-martial procedure to dehumanize defendants."

It would indeed have been a perfect illustration, had it been true. But a check on a primary source, Captain Carlotti himself, revealed that Mr. Sherrill had not got the facts quite right. (Carlotti, since returned to civilian life, was a student of mine a few years ago. I have in my file a photocopy of the relevant pages of the trial transcript, confirming his statement.) The questions were not asked by the prosecutor, but by civilian counsel for the defense, Terence Hallinan—who stands, of course, very high in the Sherrill hagiology. (But I wish to be fairer to Mr. Hallinan than Mr. Sherrill is to Captain Carlotti: The statement seems to have been volunteered by the witness and not "forced" by the questioner—although counsel usually has, or should have, a pretty good idea of what his own witness is going to say.)

Like greater practitioners of his art, Mr. Sherrill is generally careful not to cite checkable sources for his assertions and accusations; I probably would not have questioned his perfect illustration, had it not been for the one-in-a-thousand coincidence of my knowing young Carlotti. Nevertheless, some of his statements of fact and all of his statements of law can be verified or disproved by anyone with access to a law library. I did not conceive that my Hippocratic oath as a book reviewer required me to investigate each and every dubious allegation, nor could I have done so without a substantial (and improbable) grant from a foundation and the expenditure of several weeks or months—more time, in all likelihood, than Mr. Sherrill spent on his book. As the late Senator Joseph McCarthy should have taught us, it is far easier and quicker, and more fun, to fire off accusations than it is to dig up facts. It also sells better. In checking Mr. Sherrill's statements of fact and law, I was thus forced to confine myself to those which, to the trained nostril, exhaled a particularly fishy aroma. There follows a random but representative sampling of my findings.

1) "Lance Corporal William Harvey and Private George Daniels [were] sent to prison . . . for the crime of asking to talk with their commanding officer about the justice of black men being sent to Vietnam" (p. 41). They were in fact convicted of violating section 2387 of Title 18 of the United States Code, applicable to civilians as well as soldiers, which *inter alia* makes it illegal to cause or attempt to cause "insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty by any member of the military or naval forces of the United States." There is nothing illegal about asking to talk to a commanding officer about any subject whatever; Daniels did in fact talk with his company commander for several hours; none of the charges was in any way based on this conversation.

2) Captain Joseph P. Kauffman was "packed off to Wiesbaden,

JOSEPH W. BISHOP, JR., *a new contributor, is Richard Ely Professor of Law at Yale University Law School. A collection of Mr. Bishop's essays,* Obiter Dicta, *has recently been published by Atheneum.*

* Since COMMENTARY is not a law review, I have not cited all of the reported cases and other authorities supporting my statements, although I will be glad to furnish the citations to interested readers upon request.

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Germany, for trial, too far away for his civilian attorney to help him" and convicted of "conspiring to sell information to the East Germans," by evidence obtained in violation of his constitutional rights (p. 85). In fact, as Mr. Sherrill does not report, the Court of Military Appeals reversed Kauffman's conviction on the conspiracy count precisely because it found that it was based on illegally-obtained evidence; it affirmed his conviction of failure to obey a regulation requiring military personnel to report attempts by representatives of the Soviet Union and East Germany to obtain military information, which rested on untainted evidence. When he brought suit in the civilian courts to have that conviction set aside, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit unanimously concluded that the military appellate court had "fully and fairly considered appellant's claims of constitutional error and disposed of them in accordance with Supreme Court standards," adding that Kauffman had been represented at his trial by "distinguished [civilian] counsel."

3) Mr. Sherrill quotes and apparently accepts as true a statement by defense counsel in one of the Presidio cases that the Army "refused to let us call" a civilian psychiatrist as an expert witness (p. 88). Article 46 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice specifically provides that "The trial counsel [the prosecutor], the defense counsel, and the court-martial shall have equal opportunity to obtain witnesses." The defense is free to put on the stand any expert witness who is willing to testify. If any Army legal officer purported to deny the right to call such a witness, which I very much doubt, there would be no reason for competent counsel to accept the denial.

4) Colonel Earl Brown, the military judge in the court-martial of Captain Howard Levy, "left the Army for a post on the law faculty at Columbia University" (p. 123). Examination of the American Association of Law Schools' annual *Directories of Law Teachers* for the period since the Levy trial does not reveal Colonel Brown's presence on the faculty of Columbia or any other law school. (This seems to be merely an instance of slovenly reporting, for the allegation does not, so far as I can see, denigrate Colonel Brown or the Army or advance any of Mr. Sherrill's other theses.) Colonel Brown is also described as "the top lawyer in the Judge Advocate General's office," but this is a trifling error by the Sherrill standards; elsewhere (p. 64) he betrays a truly startling ignorance of the realities of life in the Pentagon by describing a lowly lieutenant colonel, at most a one-feather Indian, as a "high officer in the Pentagon's military personnel office."

5) "The Manual for Courts-Martial specifically states that courts-martial should not be convened unless the evidence is heavily stacked on the side of guilt" (p. 122). This is a highly idiosyncratic version of what I think must be the provision of paragraph 35 *b* of the Manual (which merely quotes article 34 (a) of the Uniform Code) that "the convening authority may not refer a charge to a general court-martial for trial unless he has found that the charge alleges an offense under the code and is warranted by evidence indicated in the report of investigation." So stated, the proposition is one with which few lawyers or laymen would quarrel.

6) The United States violates the international law of war, as stated in paragraph 281 of its own Manual on the Law of Land Warfare, when civilians are evacuated from combat areas in Vietnam (p. 141). If Mr. Sherrill had taken the trouble to look at the Field Manual, he would have discovered that the provision in question (which, in fact, as the Manual plainly shows, is Article 42 of the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War) relates exclusively to the internment of enemy aliens resident in the territory of a belligerent. There is nothing in international law which forbids the government of South Vietnam to move its own nationals into refugee camps. Indeed, paragraph 43 of the Manual, following Article 26 of the Hague Regulations of 1907, is designed to encourage the removal of noncombatants from areas of combat.

7) The Army is deliberately thwarting the enforcement of the Supreme Court's 1969 decision in *O'Callahan* v. *Parker*, which limited the jurisdiction of courts-martial to "service-connected" offenses, by refusing to release those who were sentenced prior to that decision for crimes not meeting the test; the O'Callahan ruling, says Mr. Sherrill flatly, "is retroactive" (p. 177). In fact, a federal district court, as well as the Court of Military Appeals, has held that it is not; and the Supreme Court in a recent decision found it unnecessary to decide the question.

8) "The Court of Military Appeals . . . does not feel bound by Supreme Court opinions, even for guidance. COMA considers itself an equal to the Supreme Court, and so it ignored the highest Court's sentiments . . ." (p. 188). In fact, the Court of Military Appeals has repeatedly held that "to the extent that a particular procedure or right is determined by the Supreme Court to be constitutionally mandated, this Court is bound by that determination, since the Supreme Court is the highest tribunal in the federal judicial hierarchy."

THE LISTING and documentation of Mr. Sherrill's errors, great and small, could literally be prolonged until the review is longer than the book. The errors of law are perhaps more forgivable than those of fact, for Mr. Sherrill is not a lawyer, and he seems to have relied on a number of flamboyant attorneys who, to put it as gently as possible, are neither very learned in military law nor very careful in their statements of fact about the cases they have lost. (Still, a good reporter would have talked to the other side and perhaps even looked at some of the books for himself.) There is, however, no excuse for some of Mr. Sherrill's distortions of history. It is simply not true that "the purpose of the clause [Article I, section 8, clause (14) of the Constitution, which empowers Congress to "make rules for the govern-

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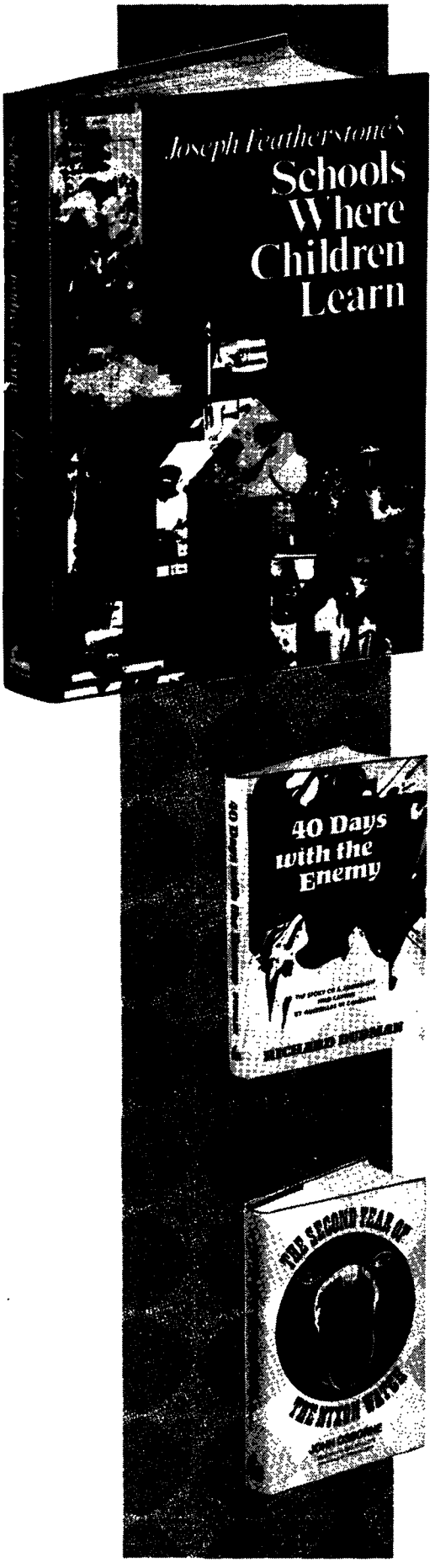

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ment and regulation of the land and naval forces"—i.e., to pass Articles of War or the Uniform Code of Military Justice] was . . . simply to establish national armed forces" (p. 168); had Mr. Sherrill looked at the Constitution he would have learned that that purpose was accomplished by clauses (12) and (13), which authorize Congress to "raise and support Armies" and to "provide and maintain a Navy." Nor is it true that clause (14) was "slipped . . . into the Constitution" or that it was "included only in the final draft and was never discussed or debated." Clause (14) was in fact taken verbatim from the Articles of Confederation, and had been in them since the original draft of July 12, 1776, as Mr. Sherrill could have learned by consulting such standard sources as Farrand's *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* and Jensen's *The Articles of Confederation*. It is not true that when the Constitution was being drafted "everyone agreed" (p. 169) that soldiers should have the same rights as other citizens; the historical evidence is overwhelming that most of the framers would have agreed with the dictum of Chief Justice Chase, in a concurring opinion in 1867, "that the power of Congress in the government of the land and naval forces . . . is not at all affected by the fifth or any other amendment." (Mr. Sherrill wrongly describes Chase's dictum as a holding of the Court "which tossed away the serviceman's rights to the protection of the Bill of Rights" [p. 186]. Actually the case, *Ex parte* Milligan, held that a civilian could not constitutionally be tried by a military commission at a time and in a place where the civilian courts were open.) But no matter what the draftsmen of the Constitution may have thought, it is today as clear as any constitutional question can be without a square holding of the Supreme Court that courts-martial are subject to much the same constitutional rules and review by the federal courts as are the criminal courts of the states. That the Supreme Court has not yet squarely so held results simply from the fact that it has not in recent years had to decide a case in which an error of "constitutional magnitude" had survived review by the military appellate courts. All of this seems to be unknown to Mr. Sherrill.

I could easily extend the list of gross historical errors. Indeed, the very title of the book (a remark attributed to Georges Clemenceau) is something of a perversion of history, for the Tiger of France, though a Radical and a Dreyfusard, was anything but a foe of the military. He used the Army to break the strikes in the Pas de Calais in 1906; he vigorously supported the extension to three years of the period of compulsory military service; he backed the ruthless mass courts-martial by which the French Army's mutinies of 1917 were quelled. What he objected to in the Dreyfus case was not that an Army officer should be court-martialed for selling military secrets to the Germans, but that he should be convicted on evidence which the court knew to be forged or perjured. Mr. Sherrill predictably compares the Dreyfus case with the trial of Captain Howard Levy (pp. 98-99), but about the only similarity is that in each case the accused was a Jew. (Captain Dreyfus, unlike Captain Levy, was a super-patriot; he somewhat resented the intermeddling of the Radical Clemenceau, whose politics he disliked.) There was no contention that Levy had not done what he was charged with doing; the substantial issues, which both military and civilian courts have so far resolved against him, were whether the order which he disobeyed was a genuine order or "given for the sole purpose of increasing the penalty for an offense which it is expected the accused may commit"; whether the statements which he undoubtedly made to enlisted men were intended, and clearly likely, to produce "disloyalty and disaffection"; and whether, even if they were, the First Amendment permitted them to be charged as crimes. These are important questions, of fact and constitutional law, but they have no more in common with the Dreyfus case than Robert Sherrill has with Emile Zola.

If only in obedience to the laws of statistical probability, some of Mr. Sherrill's denunciations of the Army are justified. On the evidence available to me, I believe that conditions in the Presidio stockade were far worse than Army regulations prescribe, although somewhat better than Mr. Sherrill says. I believe that on the facts and the law it was asinine to charge as "mutiny" the attempt of some of the prisoners to protest, more or less peacefully, against those conditions. (In fact, the Court of Military Review, the intermediate military appeals court, has reversed some of the convictions on the ground that the evidence did not support convictions of mutiny.) I believe that the necessity of subordinating the military to civilian authority does not justify, constitutionally or politically, Article 88 of the Code, which makes it unlawful for commissioned officers to use "contemptuous words against the President, the Vice President, Congress," and a long list of other civilian officials—especially when it is applied to a semi-literate reserve second lieutenant like Henry Howe. (The picket sign which Howe carried accused the then President of "facist agression" in Vietnam. Mr. Sherrill, as kind to his heroes as he is unkind to his villains, has corrected Lieutenant Howe's spelling in his account of the affair [p. 179].) I believe that the Army's practice of handing out undesirable discharges in administrative proceedings in which the soldier is entitled neither to a lawyer nor to many of the other protections he would have in a court-martial, ought to be reformed, if not by the Secretary of the Army, then by the federal courts or Congress. I believe that the military commanders who convene courts-martial, and refer charges to them, should not have the power to appoint the members of the court, who not only determine guilt or innocence but assess the punishment. (In fact, "command influence," which Mr. Sherrill flogs for most of Chapter 3, is beginning to look like a moribund, if not dead, horse. Under the 1968 amendments to the Uniform Code the accused in a non-capital case—and

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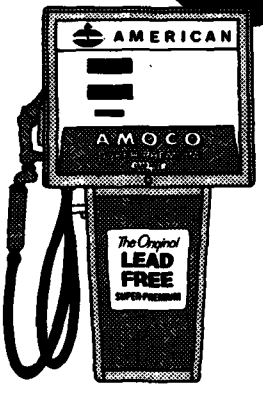

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capital cases are very rare—can demand trial by a military judge sitting alone. A military judge is responsible only to the Judge Advocate General of the service concerned; his efficiency reports and promotion are beyond the reach of the convening authority. A very large majority of accused servicemen do in fact request trial by a military judge.) I believe these things in spite of the fact that Mr. Sherrill says them.

THE banal, tiresome truth is that *any* system of criminal justice administered by human beings, probably even one administered by Mr. Sherrill, is going to be marred by stupidity and injustice. We can be certain that if Mr. Sherrill had set out to report on criminal courts and jails in Arkansas or New York he would have produced a book quite as lurid and about as truthful. The Army's criminal process and penology are at least no worse than those prevailing in most of the states. A strong argument can be made that in some important respects—notably the provision of appellate counsel and the quantity and quality of appellate review—the soldier accused of crime gets a better break than most civilians. Mr. Sherrill and his publishers, capitalizing on the current vogue, have merely added their bucket of bilge to a wave of anti-military propaganda which is approaching the proportions of a tsunami—an anti-militarism as indiscriminate and brainless as the militarism of pre-war Germany or Japan. The authors of such tracts invariably represent themselves as gallant, lonely defenders of righteousness against a ruthless military juggernaut—every one a Leonidas at Thermopylae, a Roland at the pass of Roncesvalles. But in fact they have simply taken the side of the big battalions of contemporary controversy. Much more courage (as well as much more time and trouble) would have been required of Mr. Sherrill had he undertaken to write an honest, objective, and accurate description of military justice. Like civilian justice, it could stand reform. It has had a good deal in the last twenty years, which Mr. Sherrill naturally dismisses as "half-answers and patchwork reform" (p. 3). I should have supposed that a comparison of German and Russian history with that of the United States and England would have suggested that half-answers and patchwork reform are not entirely to be despised.

There is, God knows, need for rational reform of military (and civilian) justice. There is need for information. The comments of George Wallace, Dr. Spock, and many ignoramuses of lesser note on the Calley case show the depth of public ignorance of military law. I do not think that *Military Justice Is to Justice*, etc. is likely to contribute either to rational reform or to public understanding of the problem. But its style—the blending of truth, half-truth, and untruth, flavored with labored sarcasm, to produce homogenized hate propaganda—undoubtedly has an impact on many minds. Senator McGovern, whose command of the duckspeak of the New Politics is hardly inferior to Mr. Sherrill's, says that "Sherrill's account of the sham of courts-martial and of the harsh, dehumanizing treatment of military prisoners should inspire national outrage." Mike Wallace expresses himself to much the same effect. There are far too many similar statesmen and philosophers. But in their case Sherrill merely confirms what their inner voices had already told them. The real danger is that honest people, wanting to learn the facts about an important and difficult issue, will think they have found them in Sherrill.

Proletarian Ruler

KHRUSHCHEV REMEMBERS. Translated from the Russian and edited by Strobe Talbott; with Introduction, Commentary, and Notes by Edward Crankshaw. *Little, Brown. 639 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by THEODORE FRANKEL

WHEN the young Karl Marx first extolled the dictatorship of the proletariat in the heady days of the pre-revolutionary 1840's, he doubtless had in mind a state of affairs much different from the rule of Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev a hundred and twenty years later. And had he ever permitted his youthful fantasy to limn the features of the victorious proletarians who would usher in the classless society, he would hardly have assigned to them Nikita's crafty countenance.

And yet, by one of those ironies of history so dearly beloved by Marx and Engels, Khrushchev has turned out to be a comparatively rare specimen of the proletarian-become-ruler of a modern, post-revolutionary society. As a rule, modern revolutions have not been led by members of the lower classes but by rebellious sons of the bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie—men like Lenin, Mao, and Castro, to stay with modern examples. Moreover, victorious revolutions generally have been perpetuated not by the emancipated lower classes in whose name they were accomplished but by elites of technocrats who, in their life styles and personal aspirations, were far closer to the bourgeoisie than to the proletariat. In the Soviet Union, Messrs. Brezhnev and Kosygin, with their specialists' diplomas and their Western business suits, are almost caricatures of the type, as are an increasing number of their colleagues in Eastern Europe; and a similar "bourgeoisification" of the leading cadres has only been delayed, not forestalled, in Mao's China.

A genuine proletarian ruler like Khrushchev, a miner's son who never properly finished his secondary education and yet rose to become the third-generation leader of a Communist revolution, is therefore a rarity who can be expected to bring to the business of governing a very special perspective and an unusual sensibility. It is all the more noteworthy, then, when the views of such a man are made public, as they have been in this book.

Now a great deal has been written in the press downgrading the value of *Khrushchev Remembers*. Admittedly, the authenticity of the book has been compromised by the way in which the material was procured and edited. Apparently,

THEODORE FRANKEL *is the editor of* Problems of Communism.

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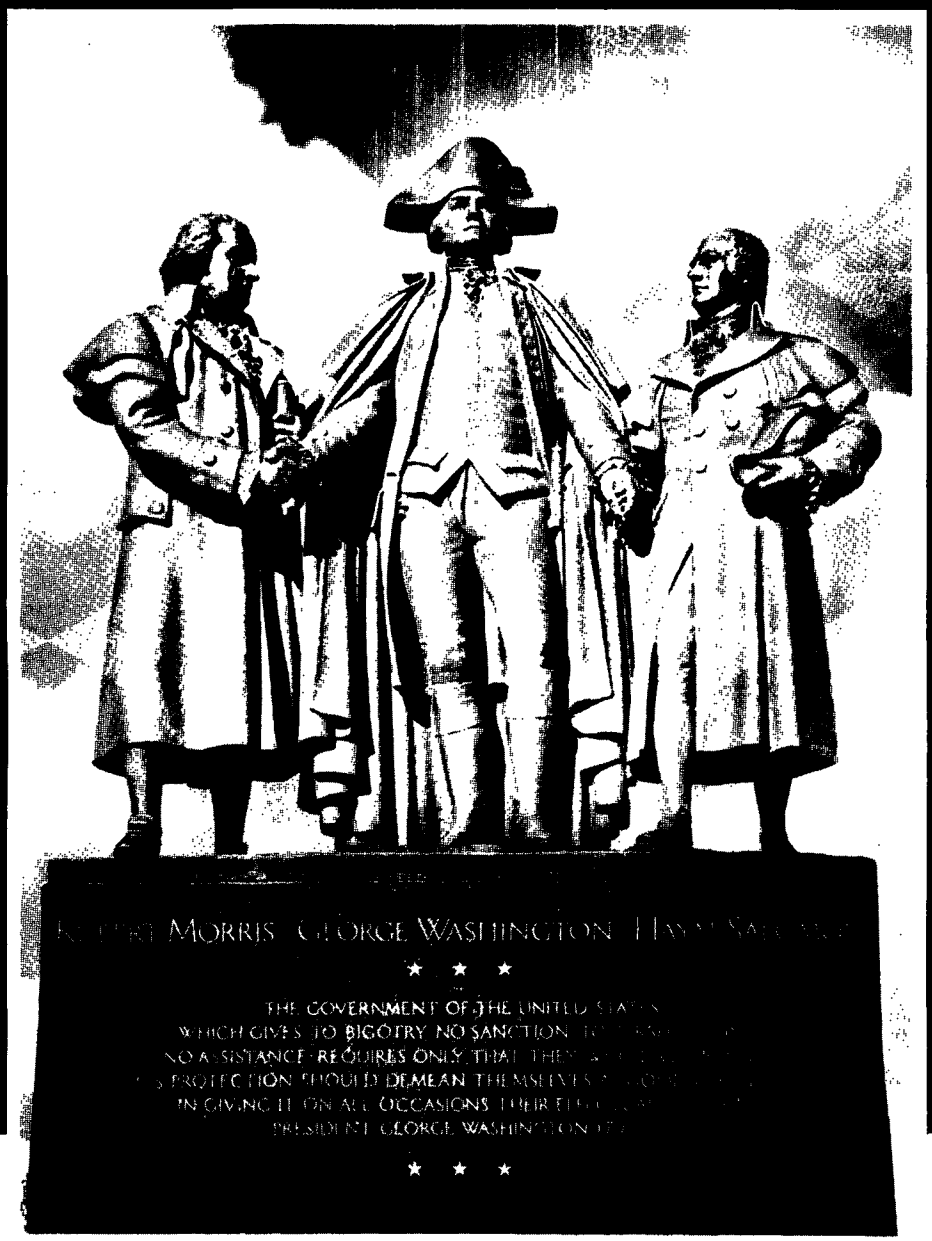
G. Washington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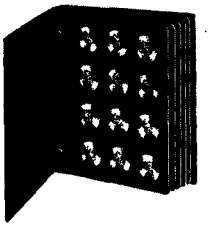

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much of it was let out of the Soviet Union in tapes, quite probably by elements of the Soviet secret police, and some of it may even have been acquired from Western sources with special collections of Khrushcheviana (how much of each is impossible to tell because of the tight secrecy imposed on the proceedings by the purchaser, Time, Inc.). Furthermore, Time, Inc., permitting no outside expert near their precious holdings, commissioned a young specialist in their employ to cut and paste the various materials into topical sections, covering Khrushchev's career in rough chronological order, which were then translated and "edited" into a coherent work.

Clearly, then, from one point of view, *Khrushchev Remembers* is an artifact which did not exist until after the KGB, Time, Inc., and Luce-only-knows-who-else had gotten into the act. And yet, looking at the matter from another point of view, much of the debate about the book's authenticity is beside the point. For while there are disputes about the genuineness of a relatively small number of tendentious passages, there is general agreement—shared even by those critics who cry "fraud"—that the overwhelming bulk of the material in this book originated with Khrushchev at some time and in some fashion. It should therefore be possible, it seems to me, to take the book as a whole and, without putting undue faith in the literal truth of any specific passage, come up with a generally valid overall impression of Khrushchev. And indeed, despite a number of inaccuracies and some curious omissions which detract from the book, the total *Gestalt* which emerges from these pages is unmistakably that of the roly-poly, tough, old party from Kalinovka who, as Stalin's successor, ruled Russia during the decade of the 1960's.

It is indicative of the kind of man Khrushchev is that the heart of these reminiscences does not lie in his recollections of the programs and projects on which he, like any other administrator, must have spent most of his waking hours during some forty years of public life, but rather in the often painful portrayal of his association with Stalin—an ambivalent relationship which was both filial and feudal. And no wonder, for Khrushchev was completely Stalin's creature. Had it not been for the old tyrant's purge of almost the entire revolutionary leadership, the untutored mechanic from the boondocks would not, in all likelihood, have risen in a scant eight years from the post of party secretary of a Moscow district to full membership in the Politburo.

Khrushchev is always quite clear about whose child he is: he tells us how he first brought himself to Stalin's attention by acting as the bully boy for the Stalinist faction at the Moscow Industrial Institute, where he was a student and political activist in 1929; how he subsequently rose by invariably taking Stalin's side in the latter's struggles with Trotsky, Bukharin *et al.* in the 1930's and by acting as Stalin's faithful steward in running Moscow and later the Ukraine. And when he was recalled to Moscow in 1949, it was, as he points out, to protect Stalin's power by acting as a counterbalance to Malenkov and Beria in the inner circle of the Kremlin. Khrushchev is nothing if not candid on this score. "I was a product of Stalin's generation," he says at one point. And elsewhere: "I was a hundred per cent faithful to Stalin. . . ." And he sums it all up by saying: "I always stood for the Stalinist position."

Set against these hearty avowals of devotion are expressions of equally cordial filial hatred which, in line with the intimate nature of the relationship, seem to be motivated even more by the recollection of personal slights than by memories of policy disagreements (though the latter are also important). This sense of festering hurt, fostered during an overlong period of dependency on the old man, comes through most strongly in the retelling of individual affronts to Khrushchev's pride in such episodes as Stalin's command to him to dance the *Gopak*—a Ukrainian peasant dance—for the edification of the Premier's drunken companions; the public dressing-downs he received from Stalin; and the humiliating order Stalin gave him, in his capacity as Moscow's boss, to make the proper functioning of the capital's toilets his first order of business. Such memories seem to rankle even more than the recollections of the terrible insecurity and fear of being liquidated, the sense of being "temporary people," which hung over all of Stalin's familiars.

This sense of impaired manhood was clearly reinforced toward the end of the relationship by a mounting feeling of revulsion on Khrushchev's part for Stalin's more unattractive character traits: his cowardice and indecision in the face of Hitler's initial onslaught on Russia in 1941, the Byzantine style of his court, his encouragement of drunkenness among his entourage, and his growing paranoia in old age. Finally, there were the disagreements on such policy matters as Stalin's manner of collectivizing agriculture with its incalculable damage to Russia's peasantry, the downgrading of the Communist party apparatus in favor of the secret police, the wholesale purges of millions of people—matters which Khrushchev now vigorously deplores and some of which he mitigated during his own rule, but all of which he was compelled to implement vigorously during Stalin's reign.

The ambivalent nature of Khrushchev's relationship with Stalin is perhaps best illustrated in his description of Stalin's deathbed scene, with his successors waiting in attendance—an occasion so grisly and so fraught with innuendo that it recalls Freud's evocation, in *Totem and Taboo,* of the slaying of the tribal father by his sons. In this case, such death wishes are ascribed only to Beria, while Khrushchev ostentatiously protests his love for Stalin to the last: "Far from looking forward to Stalin's death, I actually feared it." Yet his subsequent actions—and particularly the removal of Stalin's corpse from its burial place alongside Lenin—speak a different language, the language of a parricide manqué who is trying to compensate for his lack of manhood during the old man's life by extra-strenuous efforts to exorcise his ghost. Although this scabrous vendetta involved meritorious reversals of policy, like Khrushchev's

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mitigation of the use of terror, the emotional driving force at the heart of it should not be overlooked. Even at this distance in time, it leads Khrushchev into some strange manifestations of anti-Stalinism: his interminable denunciation of Stalin's dislike for Jews, for example, even though this is a trait which Khrushchev is known to share in full measure.

IF Khrushchev felt pursued by Stalin's ghost for a long time, he did gradually liberate himself from its haunting presence. As he began coming into his own in the late 1950's, he started to display, for all the world to see, the qualities a proletarian could bring to high office. It is perhaps unfortunate for Khrushchev that the most visible of these qualities was a certain coarseness of character and crudity of behavior. But it must be noted that if these qualities were visible it was because Khrushchev chose to exaggerate what came naturally and to flaunt a life style born out of a social consciousness of class that was quite different from Marx's philosophical concept of class consciousness. Khrushchev's self-promotion as the quintessential proletarian was calculated, one suspects, both to legitimize himself at home with the Russian people as one of their own—so different from his Byzantine predecessor and from his bourgeoisified underlings and potential successors—and to undercut the aristocratic pretensions of his most prominent counterparts abroad. More than that, his clowning in the UN, his vulgar behavior during state visits, his deliberate gaucheries toward visiting dignitaries, amounted to a proletarian mockery of all Establishments (including his own) that was meant to unite the proletarians of all countries in common derision of those who thought themselves their betters.

The memoirs contain numerous instances of this low-class irreverence, notably in several vignettes drawn from Khrushchev's visit to England (the account of his journey to the United States in 1959 is missing). When, for instance, Khrushchev was asked by the wife of Prime Minister Anthony Eden how far Soviet missiles could fly, he replied, "They could easily reach your island." But the best testimonies to Khrushchev's impishness are the snapshots, most of them presented for the first time publicly in this book, which show him pressing his pudgy Slavic nose into a fragile Chinese flower during a visit to Canton, or participating in a shoot, his posture conveying both enjoyment and ridicule of the sport.

A less evident but perhaps more important feature of Khrushchev's proletarian *persona* was his sympathy—empathy is perhaps a better word—for the common people of Russia. The feeling of nearness to the plain folk comes through in those parts of the narrative in which he tells of his early years of hardship, the death of his first wife during the famine of 1921, his pride in being "one of the very few workers" selected for a position on the Ukrainian Central Committee in 1928. "We miners and metalworkers were the real proletariat, the salt of the earth and the bedrock of the party," he remarks in telling the story. The feeling is further reflected in what he calls his "constitutional block against clerical work," his aversion to "having to look over a stack of files and forms to see the real world," and his predilection for getting his boots and hands dirty. It showed itself also in Khrushchev's repeated journeys away from Moscow to the provinces and his everlasting chats with workers and peasants, from which he seemed to derive genuine pleasure and uplift. It is apparent, finally, in his dislike of the Soviet bureaucracy, which he loved to shake up in recurrent reform campaigns, and in his pro-consumer policies which significantly increased the incomes of peasants and workers.

Another legacy of Khrushchev's proletarian upbringing was his particular kind of toughness and nerve. During his years as Stalin's liege, Khrushchev cheerfully bullied the opposition and sternly drove the population to greater exertions; and after Stalin's death, he played the risky game for Stalin's succession daringly and coldly against the dreaded Beria and the clever Malenkov. After his accession to power, he waged epic battles—the reverberations of which still rumble through this book—against the ground forces, whose size he cut back drastically, and against their allies in Soviet heavy industry with their endless demands for additional resources. Nor did he shun battle with his own party apparatus, which he reorganized within an inch of its collective life in 1962 and with which he engaged in repeated confrontations that demanded a very special kind of guts.

Finally, Khrushchev was the possessor of a shrewd and cynical common sense which made him distrust ideologists and theoreticians and rely on his own earthy instincts. Some of the more memorable manifestations of his pragmatism were his attempt to reach a détente with the West (after his international gambles had failed) and his decision to reorient the Soviet military posture from a defense based on conventional forces to the more realistic and less expensive posture of deterrence. Unfortunately, such matters of high policy are not recounted in any depth in this book, but Khrushchev's pragmatic bent of mind comes through in numerous homely observations, like his remark that the way to deal with the USSR's endemic black market was to provide more consumer goods (though in his heyday he was not above shooting blackmarketeers, particularly when they had Jewish names), and his proposal to let would-be emigrants like Svetlana Alliluyeva leave without molestation.

Set against these virtues, however, were equal and compensating shortcomings, most of them rooted in the inadequacy of the populist response to modern conditions. Perhaps the least serious of these was Khrushchev's sense of inferiority. At home, this was most evident in his venomous attacks on his competitor, Malenkov, an educated man of middle-class background whose condescension toward Khrushchev during World War II still seems to rankle after a quarter of a century. Abroad, Khrushchev was acutely embarrassed that the Soviet delegation to the Geneva conference arrived in a modest twin-engine plane

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while its capitalist rivals arrived in big four-engine aircraft. Harmless perhaps, and yet, sentiments such as these contribute to technological and arms races.

Far more serious was the particular narrowness of vision, deriving from Khrushchev's proletarian upbringing and lack of schooling, which in his case aggravated the ignorance of the outside world common to all Soviet leaders. On the most humble level, this particular failing was exhibited in such silly gibes as the following, directed at Ambassador P. F. Yudin: "Yudin was sent to Yugoslavia, and we had a falling-out with Tito. Yudin went to China, and we had a falling-out with Mao. This was no coincidence." Such determined simplicity, applied to domestic policies, led Khrushchev to espouse half-baked nostrums to cure major social problems, like his overly-ambitious "virgin lands" scheme, which was designed to remedy at one stroke the chronic failures of Soviet agriculture resulting from decades of neglect and exploitation. Abroad, this blindered vision led him into egregiously dangerous ventures like the Cuban missile crisis, which brought the world to the brink of atomic war.

Perhaps the most serious shortcoming, at least to Khrushchev personally, was his difficulty in dealing efficiently and on terms of mutual respect with the bureaucratic bodies indispensable to the operation of a large and complex society like the Soviet Union. It might have been courageous of Khrushchev and satisfying to his proletarian soul to have downgraded the secret police, reorganized the party and economic administration, and reduced the size of the ground forces. But, in the short run, his anti-bureaucratic campaigns only served to impede the smooth operation of the Soviet superstate, and in the long run, they had the effect of unifying all segments of the bureaucracy in a conspiracy to unseat him.

LOOKING BACK at the career of this Ivan-become-Czar from the vantage of the present, how does one strike the balance? Taking all things together, it seems safe to

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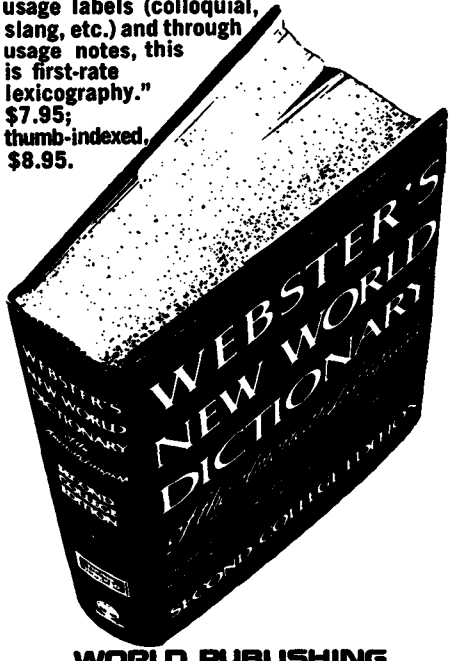

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prophesy that future historians in the Soviet Union and in the West will agree in considering Khrushchev a "temporary man." In the Soviet Union, his successors have already modified or scrapped most of his major policies, including the decentralization of industry, his agricultural schemes, the reorganization of the party, and his attempts at international détente. They are even partially reversing his de-Stalinization program. And their successors will no doubt evaluate Khrushchev's attempt to enforce his will against the collective wisdom of the party and state apparatuses as worse than harebrained; they will judge it as "objectively reactionary" even though —or maybe because—Khrushchev acted as if he represented the workers and toilers directly, by virtue of his proletarian origins.

Western observers, one suspects, will be inclined to agree. Despite a sneaking affection for Khrushchev's colorful personality and an appreciation of his efforts on behalf of the common man in Russia and of détente abroad, these observers will in all likelihood see him as a transitional and minor figure. On the level of political statesmanship, his attempt to prevent the evolution of the Communist movement into a stable bureaucratic system will probably be judged as quixotic and futile: after all, Khrushchev, a bureaucrat *malgré lui*, presided over the inexorable bureaucratization of the Soviet Union. On the level of day-to-day leadership, his pragmatic, populist style of governing not only was marred by inconsistencies (most notably in his vacillations about the amount of freedom to be given artists and intellectuals) but was proved unfeasible in two very specific ways. First, while Khrushchev's egalitarian leanings could not stop the increasing social stratification of society that went hand in hand with the country's growing modernization, they could—and did—serve to muddle this development. Secondly, his habit of substituting his proletarian "gut" reactions for the informed judgment of experts, however refreshing and even meritorious in individual instances, was simply too dangerous in the age of the computer and the atomic bomb.

Finally, and somewhat pathetically, on the level where ideology and personal fate mesh, Khrushchev's career furnished a poignant refutation of his own most deeply-held conviction. For the ultimate ineffectuality of his life, caught kaleidoscopically in the disconnected reflections of his reminiscences, demonstrates, if yet another demonstration is needed, that Marx's dream of the proletariat as the redeemer of mankind has proven to be precisely what Marx feared most—the unrealizable vision of a utopia that will never be.

Jews & Gentiles

THE GOY. By MARK HARRIS. *Dial Press. 272 pp. $5.95.*

Reviewed by CYNTHIA OZICK

WHEN a book by a writer with a large following drops into the void, one wonders why. There may have been one or two other reviews of Mark Harris's *The Goy*—his first novel in ten years—but I recall only that the reviewer for the Sunday *Times* called it "gratuitously venomous" and took note of the circumstance that Harris was born Finkelstein. Otherwise the book has been allowed to sink out of sight almost as if it were a first novel. Yet *The Goy* is an enterprise which, it seems to me, not only makes large claims for itself, but lays large claims on our attention and our inquiries.

One of these inquiries ought to go to the metamorphosis of the novelist himself: how does it come about that the author of baseball novels, a writer whose fiction has up to now engaged in what must be called WASP impersonation, suddenly bursts out with a book about the nature of the Jewish mind? Is it that something has happened inside Mark Harris, or inside America? That a hitherto frolicsome entertainer-novelist of Jewish origins all at once begins to write seriously about being Jewish is not very remarkable in itself —we have seen it once before, in Ludwig Lewisohn, who turned from the kind of fiction that made him a popular novelist (*The Case of Mr. Crump*) to the passionate tracts (the novel *The Island Within*, the lyrical prose essay called *Israel*) that returned him to obscurity. But Harris with *The Goy* is not simply abandoning popular subject matter; and besides, in a literary community which celebrates both S. Levin and Mr. Sammler, the problem is not that *The Goy* represents a conversion, so to speak, from baseball back to being Finkelstein. The problem is that *The Goy* is purposefully designed, for whatever curious reason, to be a pariah book: its fate is its theme. It is, especially, designed to poison those abundantly philo-Semitic reviewers who mean to bring good will to the fiction of Jewish marginality.

What makes *The Goy* untouchable, particularly for critics, is that it is an attack on that very Gentile culture—the literature of "humanism"—which produces literary critics. Worse yet, it is an attack on the complex of historical and social attitudes that make up the Gentile mind itself—or call it, more definitively, the Christian mentality. It is this mentality, in its most secularized and liberalized forms, at its apparent pinnacle of clarity and effectiveness, that *The Goy* is out to get. The *Times* reviewer mistakenly called Harris's book "a repudiation of Mr. Agnew's America." In fact it is a repudiation of the America of coexistence, accommodation, moderation—of the America, in short, of most American Jews; of the "Judeo-Christian tradition"; even of the good will of the Gentile reviewer himself. It is as if Mark Harris one day in sunny Indiana had fallen upon a cave laden with all the volumes of Graetz's *History of the Jews*, Malcolm Hay's *The Foot of Pride*, James Parkes's *The Conflict of the Church and the Synagogue*—as if he had suddenly fallen from St. Augustine and the sublimeness of Chartres into the other side of Christian history, into a vast heap of pre-Holocaust chronicling, and had come up stunned and bloodied. How the

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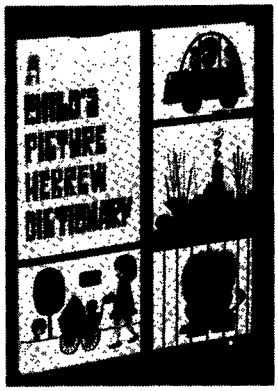

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author of baseball novels comes to dream the-Jew-of-Europe is itself a dark dream: something has broken, something has imploded at the core, America has turned—for Harris—into the Europe of Graetz.

HARRIS begins, then, craftily: he posits Westrum. Westrum is a Christian American, a man of the West in the larger sense, of the Midwest in the local sense. His father is a ferocious anti-Semite. His mother is a decent Christian woman—what is usually meant by that phrase: namely, an onlooker. Long ago she looked on while his father drove a Jewish family from town. The town itself is a bad and backward place: in it children learn that "the poor we will always have, the Indians were savages, the Jews are greedy, the blacks are lazy, the railroad is here to stay." Out of this backwash of the Reformation Westrum somehow springs fully into otherness; he appears to have grown into the world with the kind of secularized social conscience Jews are notorious for. Harris does not answer the mystery of Westrum's conscience or his otherness; or, rather, he answers it only as to its bits and scraps—Westrum, a bookish boy isolated by his bookishness in childhood, is therefore drawn to the unselfconscious bookishness of Jews. There is in Westrum that which needs Jews. What planted the need? Out of what pressure does it issue? No answer. When Jews want to be like Gentiles, we know why. We do not know why Westrum needs to be like Jews. In a *goy* it is perverse; it is abnormal. Heine's conversion, Disraeli's baptism—these make pragmatic sense. Those Jewish philosophers—Bergson, Simone Weil—who distort Judaism in order to repudiate it, these make even more sense: they help wash away the idiosyncratic configurations of the minority mythos, they clarify and affirm the claims of the West. But Westrum represents a reversal of everything we have ever known: he is a man acculturating to Jews.

The external signs of this reversal are clear enough: he learns to say *shiksa*; he marries a Jew. His sons—Westrum has three—are half-Jews. Unlike the Jewish philosophers of Christianity, he can repudiate his inheritance without distortion: seeing it clearly, particularly its historical attitude toward Jews, is the point of the repudiation. But all of this is inadequate. It is not enough to have Jewish friends, a Jewish wife, Jewish children; biology is not Jewish. How then shall Westrum become like a Jew? What is the Jewish "secret"? Westrum hits it precisely: What makes a Jew is the conscious implication in millennia. To be a Jew is to be every moment in history, to keep history for breath and daily bread. How clever of Harris to make Westrum clever enough to clothe himself in history! Thus clothed, Westrum puts on the gabardine. In Philip Roth's "Eli, the Fanatic," there is a similar removal from the center to the edge: a man of the majority puts on the mien of a man of the minority; but both are Jews. The Jew in the business suit is transformed into the refugee in gabardine. But Harris is even more innovative. In *The Goy* it is a *goy* who infiltrates the Jews. Westrum, having perceived the mainstream to be bestial in its ancestral usages, is attracted to prey; in theory it is nobler to be prey than beast.

Under the influence of this attraction he writes a vast book, *A History of the Past World,* and perversely (for why should it?) it makes him famous, leisured, rich. Through it he learns the quality of Jewish priorities:

> . . . Jews . . . had made him think his work made sense. They believed in the perilous world and therefore in every effort, whether history or introspection, to find it out, explain it, clarify it, and maybe even partly solve it. They feared the outside danger. They thought that books, art, history, science, inquiry mattered. . . .

After several editions the title is changed to *The History of the Past World,* and Westrum, in the shift from the generalized *A* to the particularized *The,* at last becomes situated in the locus of peculiarity: becomes Judaized. He works on a Presidential committee for social justice. He is renowned for liberal views. His brother-in-law Tikvah, having begun a history called *Potentialities for Fascism in America,* can't finish it. "My coming on the scene," Westrum explains, "stopped [it] forever. Its thesis is that every goy is a Jew-hater somewhere just below the surface, but as long as I appeared to be the exception to his theory he couldn't go on, he had no theory, his theory went bust." Entering Jewish history, Westrum causes it to halt; when the *goy* ceases to be a *goy,* Jewish history has no subject matter.

This, then, is Harris's seeming premise; that on occasion history can reverse itself, that on occasion the majority will be zealous after the minority, that now and then Esau will wish to live in Jacob's tent.

The usual proposition—Jacob putting on goatskins to impersonate Esau—has often and often flowered in history; frequently enough in the masks of fiction. Cultural impersonation is an ancient artistic risk, and remains interesting. Outside of literature, Jews—a minority treated to resemble the majority—can sometimes be absorbed into the dominant biology, like those mimetic surgical stitches which need never be ripped out; the host-tissue swallows them without a trace. Acculturation—absorption—of the minority into the majority is, after all, almost a definition of civilization; of a civilization's root energy source. When Matthew Arnold said that he would not like to have been born a Jew or a Socinian (the Socinians were 16th-century Unitarians), he did not mean that he disliked anyone who denied the divinity of Jesus, or even that he disapproved of the denial itself. His objection was pragmatically related to an idea about civilization. He pitied the unassimilable; he thought it "better" to be in the "mainstream"; he wanted to be civilized, by which he meant belonging to the locally prevailing mythos—to the West as Christendom.

IN INVENTING Westrum, Harris postulates the obverse force of Arnold, a darkened counterpart—one implicated, like Arnold, with the drift of his civilization, owned by it and its owner, but with this dif-

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ference: he chooses against the Arnoldian thesis. Himself the best of the majority in imaginative power and prowess, Westrum chooses to acculturate to the minority; through a voluntary act either of renunciation or taking-on, or both, he chooses to habituate his life to pariah modes. The thesis in reverse—assimilation into marginality—*is* a dazzlingly innovative but grotesque meditation: grotesque because it goes against the grain of what really happens, it distorts normal historical expectation. If Harris—or anyone*—could have brought this off, he would have written the novel of the century. But no one can bring it off. In literature it is perilous to be too original in one's premise—one ends not with a novel but with a fairy tale. And Harris, eschewing fantasy, does not mean to bring it off. Having startled us with his reverse proposition, Harris gradually leads us to discover that he does not intend to make it work; he accepts Arnold's law of civilization. He is not interested in staging a miracle play.

And so he peels the Judaized clothing off Westrum to reveal the spots beneath:

Westrum is a good father. But once, in a rage, he broke his young son's back; no one remembers whether, in that rage, he called the boy a Jew. He is a good husband, though not faithful. He is not faithful to his Jewish mistress either, and thinks about taking another, also Jewish. He woos her with a Jewish-sounding slogan: "Football is Fascist." Once a football player himself, he is still a fanatic athlete, devoted to the upkeep of his body for its own sake. He clocks his daily run—a life's habit. Invited to join a prestigious think-tank, he broods on Benstock, Weinberg, Silvers, his colleagues: "All Jews here but me"—this silent phrase another life's habit. He says he does not smoke or drink, but he does both, by stealth; he says he sleeps with no one but his wife, whom he deceives by stealth. Though a humanitarian, he concludes that his typist is an unaware automaton: "he had dismissed her uniqueness," but she learns from him to deceive him by stealth.

Now he is writing not a general history, but something private, not social but self-directed, in his own mind grander than history or society: a Journal, the confessions of Westrum's soul; it is Christian to suppose that the individual soul equals the world. He "lives his life twice"—once in the staged happening, once in the shrewd sly malice of writing it truthfully down. It is a work of stealth. Disciplined and introspective as Loyolan exercises, kept up every day for years in an invented secret shorthand, this Journal, already distinguished though undisclosed, has a compulsive criminal honesty. It tells how Westrum lies without point, in small unnecessary things; how Westrum is like his father: he is attracted to prey; how Westrum is not like his father: he hates the Jews by stealth. His son, a half-Jew, Westrum has now made a Jew altogether: with his mended spine the boy can't run, can't play football, just like some bookish urban Jew. But the boy is not bookish; his grammar is bad. He is a skilled filmmaker, though, and photographs his father with a corrective intuition: he longs to mollify and flatter his powerful father, so Westrum in his Jewish son's movie comes out the ideal movie star, a handsome, clean-living, filial, patriotic, churchy, dog-loving, country-humorous WASP. When this son was circumcised Westrum joked about the bill: "Jesus, it costs me money to be a Jew"—his only Jewish joke, because he is serious about prey. He is an infiltrator, an underminer, a corrupter—he has made his wife not like having a Jewish face. He hates the meticulous conscience of her brother Tikvah. All the same she believes in him and takes him at his (public) word—thereby changing from his wife into his public, and betrayed both ways.

Nobody else really and truly understood [thinks Westrum's

*I know of only two other works of fiction hung on this premise. One is Norma Rosen's *Touching Evil* (1969), wherein a young woman follows the Eichmann trial on television and becomes Judaized. The other is, of course, Bernard Malamud's *The Assistant*. Both of these books harbor miracle plays in that the premise is allowed to stand.

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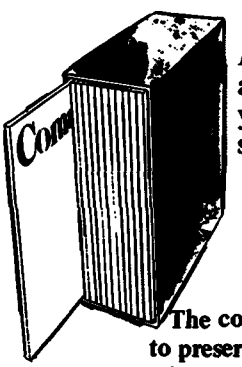

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wife] that Westrum's mistrust of himself was greater than anyone else's mistrust of him, and with less reason; that he tormented himself beyond necessity; that he suffered a moral concern too exquisite. . . . He feared that he carried within himself that seed of moral indifference which had permitted his father and his father's fathers down the line to take pleasure in war, hatred, and the violent advance of their own interests, all in the name of American duty and service.

If he had done her ill at all it was by giving her so good an opinion of the country. He was not the country.

The burden of *The Goy* is that Westrum *is* the country; that like Westrum the country is a lie and a deception, that moral indifference is endemic, and cannot be introspected away; is in fact increased by intellectual application. Ultimately this is a novel (or, rather, it is Tikvah's treatise completed) about its own apparent premise—which is to say, the premise tested, contradicted, traduced: the *goy* doesn't change his spots, even in America. It is a rough, supple, and ingeniously scouted book, as cruel and precise as its title: if *goy* has become a Yiddishism signifying roughneck and persecutor, it is also the Hebrew word which designates a nation, any nation, including the Jews. At bottom *The Goy* is not an exploration of the character of "the *goyim*," or even of the character of America; it is a novel about the imperatives of Jewish character, defined not by what is "Jewish," but by what is incontrovertibly not. That there is a cleavage between the Jews and the noblest social ideals of Western civilization is not something we are just finding out, after all; it is not something Matthew Arnold (who dispassionately saw Jews as outside civilization), or even his less disinterested descendant, T.S. Eliot (whose *Idea of a Christian State* simply and axiomatically excludes Jews), or any other theoretician of culture had to tell us. What makes *The Goy* provocative in its despair is Harris's willingness to extend the case beyond Europe to the good *goyim* of America—to those Puritan consciences, emancipated intellectuals, liberal academicians, liberated allies, friends, wives, husbands, and half-Jewish children of Jews.

And what makes *The Goy* finally such an extremely curious book—a curio, in fact—is that it reflects with static precision a mentality we had thought America—and certainly the advent of Israel—had at last wiped out: what the *shtetl* used to call "fear of the *goy*." Perhaps this is what has put off the *goyim*—those Gentile critics who are in fact *genuine* emancipated intellectuals and liberal allies. It is in the nature of good will to shun those who suspect it of ill.

Portrait of a Lady

A WHITE HOUSE DIARY. By LADY BIRD JOHNSON. *Holt, Rinehart & Winston. 791 pp. $10.95.*

Reviewed by DOROTHY RABINOWITZ

NO LONGER, if ever it was, a presence in our public life, the voice of a lady is, evidently, still marked by certain authenticating notes: it is still just perceptibly chilly to one's enemies, gracious to one's inferiors, loyal to one's clan. Easily the most considerable and accomplished of the ladies in the White House since Eleanor Roosevelt, Lady Bird Johnson's recollections testify to certain virtues which have stood the test of time and literature. When she disapproves of something she casts about, like a lady, for the mitigating good; when she recounts something loathsome to her soul, she finds, for balance, something to praise. There is no evidence that those who offended her sense of things ever deserved reclamation: but that she would have known to begin with. Merit is one of the things a lady does not take into account when distributing largesse.

When the Reverend Cotesworth Pinckney Lewis chose obliquely to attack the Vietnam war while in his church Lyndon Johnson and family were trapped in prayer, Lady Bird turned to stone. The expression on the minister's face, it did not escape her, was unctuous. Nonetheless, Lady Bird found much to praise, several times around, in the work of the choir. As for the Reverend Pinckney Lewis: "Be it said for my husband that he shook hands briefly with a smile, while I said, 'The choir was beautiful.'" Again, in an encounter with Kingman Brewster, the president of Yale who even then exhibited a precocious sensitivity to the prevailing winds of fashion, Mrs. Johnson could take a thoughtful measure of a man. In academia she had found herself in a dukedom as trembly as any she might have encountered on the official political circuit. The First Lady, perhaps wisely, evinced no surprise at the similarities between Yale's president and farsighted local politicians who take good care to make themselves scarce when an embarrassment comes visiting. No doubt the similarity was not lost upon her:

> We exchanged a few words and went inside. . . . Quite soon the feeling came across to me that my presence here was really an imposition on him. His manner was absolutely correct, but if I have any antennae at all I sensed that he wished he had no part of it.

Lady Bird spoke to the crowd. There was only picketing activity in those then innocent days at Yale, but the university presidents had already had evidence of the trouble they would see. Mrs. Johnson filed, for future reference, her understanding of the breed:

> When President Brewster rose to introduce me, I came to a more complete understanding of the situation. His introduction was generous, even eloquent. . . . I wish I had a copy of his speech. At any rate, the impression I received was that he was disassociating himself from President Johnson, from the administration, letting his constituency—that is, the students and faculty of Yale—know that he was with them in heart, but at the same time maintaining a gentlemanly and correct stance of hospitality to the First Lady.

Mrs. Johnson had no way of know-

DOROTHY RABINOWITZ, *a frequent contributor, is the co-author of* Home Life, *a novelistic study of old-age homes, which has recently been issued by Macmillan.*

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ing, and therefore it could not have comforted her, that her reluctant host would a few years later be as shamed to countenance the courts of the land as to entertain the President's wife; that as charter member of the New Breed of College Presidents, he would attach considerable, if undue, significance to the broadcast of his views for some years to come. She had, nevertheless, a velvet reproach for an adversary who had, at least, frozen her out gallantly, like a gentleman. That he had been chilly in his own political interest Lady Bird, above all, would understand. But her understanding, characteristically, could not be confused with forgiveness. The character of this lady was such that, having looked once upon certain violations of the spirit, their impression was everlasting. Inhospitality was such a violation.

HER own heart was quite unpolitic in its passions. It was, on all occasions, quick to heat in defense of those she loved, among them none more than her husband, Lyndon Johnson. Perhaps the most extraordinary feature of the memoirs is the indirect, revealing light cast upon the President by this First Lady, whose perspective was shaped by many hours of solitary waiting. Two A.M. feedings of cold-roast-beef-with-pimento-cheese sandwiches were often as not the only meal she shared with her lateworking husband. The most frequent glimpse of LBJ the reader is vouchsafed is of his bedtime, a rather more complicated undertaking than one would have supposed, even for Presidents.

Bedtime for LBJ was not so much the more intimate part of domestic life as it was another lap in the daily rounds of the Presidency. As though the President abed was not sufficiently busy reading himself to sleep with state papers and being roused by phone calls announcing Middle East wars and assassinations, there were the Johnson daughters. It will be recalled that Lynda Bird, in the small hours of the morning, groped her way to the Presidential bed to share with her parents the joy of her engagement to Lieutenant Robb. The President, Mrs. Johnson records thankfully, fell asleep in due time. But those nocturnal adventures were ill-designed to preserve the health of the President, and Lady Bird was above all determined to preserve it. She had noted often, observing the portrait of the haggard Woodrow Wilson, that Presidents must have their portraits done early in office. The years of governance would shatter the healthiest of men, and Lyndon Johnson was not the healthiest; she was determined to impede the process with all cunning. In the meantime, there were the demands of posterity. A sculptor struck her husband's likeness for the Presidential medal, causing Mrs. Johnson to muse, "Lyndon, I think, has a rather magnificently shaped head." In the end, she disapproved the medal likeness, for characteristic reasons: it was not true to the spirit of things.

> The mouth I didn't really like much. It had an almost too beneficent look, a look I have seen many times and like. But I think . . . there is another attribute more true to his life—a certain grimness or determination.

Less happily Lyndon Johnson's portrait was finally assayed and the results, by now forgotten, were once briefly a *cause célèbre*. The eyes were wrong, the hands were wrong. In the course of a desperately uncomfortable hour, against which she had steeled herself for a long time, Lady Bird and the President explained to the artist, Peter Hurd, and to his angry young wife, that the portrait would not do. Lady Bird was sympathetic, but characteristically firm on elementary rules: "But there is one thing one has a right to express oneself on—and that is one's own portrait." Lady Bird flees as soon as she is gracefully able to (and no mistaking it, there is a rogue's pleasure in her running off to hide from the encounter and recover by watching *Gunsmoke*), while the aggrieved artist and his wife flounce off to make their case known to the newspapers. But that is history.

SOME confrontations were not as painful as others. Mrs. Johnson was surely not the first President's wife to understand that crises of the ludicrous and matters of the gravest moment would be presented equally for her consideration, with no one to breathe a hint of the difference. When, during a visit of the King and Queen of England, Eleanor Roosevelt was faced with the protocol which demanded that the King be served several seconds before anyone else, for which purpose his serving attendant carried a watch with a second hand, it was for FDR to make short shrift of matters by declaring that *his* serving attendant would consult no stopwatch; he and the King would be served simultaneously. Such is the serenity of the well born. Assuredly, neither of the Johnsons was bred of the aristocracy and consequently there were bad moments with the more nonsensical forms of protocol, despite the dictates of Lady Bird's common sense. On the occasion that Robert Merrill of the Metropolitan Opera was invited to sing for Prime Minister Wilson the press claimed that Merrill's chosen repertoire—"On the Road to Mandalay" and "Oh, I Got Plenty O' Nuthin' "—was an insult to the British Empire which, not fortuitously, had just pulled its troops out of Suez and devalued the pound. Lady Bird records her relief that the Prime Minister, reading of the furor, sent word that these songs were his special favorites. Mrs. Johnson describes this as the most ridiculous crisis so far. (She could not of course have known that her husband's successor would turn the White House guard out in uniforms recalling the mythical kingdom of Fredonia.)

Altogether, Lady Bird did not suffer confrontations—or rudeness—easily, though she encountered them often enough. Clearly she was as appalled by bad behavior as by a soul's poison. She dealt forthrightly with Eartha Kitt when that lady made a scene at a White House luncheon. She had already seen the White House Arts Festival turned into a shambles by boycotting artists and by those who could not make up their mind either way. Robert Lowell did not come. John Hersey came and lectured. Dwight Macdonald wandered around with a petition dis-

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approving the President's policy. Lady Bird observes with unconcealed satisfaction that there is uncertainty whether he got four or seven signatures out of three hundred guests. All of these rudenesses affected the First Lady deeply, perhaps less by virtue of their attack upon her husband, than by their gratuitous nature. They had come invited. They had betrayed hospitality.

Lyndon Johnson could scarcely have given Lady Bird cause to feel a tenth of the coolness she felt for these enemies of the polite spirit. Nonetheless, she could be severe with him. She was intolerant when he spoke long, and he spoke long often. No less than six times in the memoirs, Lady Bird records her displeasure at Lyndon's speeches going on too long. On the other hand, she observes much the same fault upon watching Eugene McCarthy on television. As early as 1963, she had already noted that Eugene McCarthy was "a little too verbose."

The memoirs, tape-recorded over the Johnson years (1963-69), are a full, and disturbing, replay of the nation's troubles. These years, beginning with the first Kennedy assassination in 1963 and moving through the growing horror of the war and the urban riots to the wild year of 1968 and the deaths of Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy, are dark as national chronicle. They were dreadful years; they are not less dreadful now. Despite the innate good temper of her breed, the chronicler of these years, it is not surprising, left the White House for the Johnson Ranch with a grateful heart.

The Scenic Tour

CIVILISATION. By KENNETH CLARK. *Harper & Row. 378 pp. $15.00.*

Reviewed by THEODORE K. RABB

THE WORD "civilization" seems to have made its first appearance almost two hundred years ago, in 1772 to be precise, when Boswell suggested to Dr. Johnson that he use the term to denote the opposite of barbarism. To Kenneth Clark, however, civilization is apparently not always the opposite of barbarism, although it is better—this we learn on page one of *Civilisation*, together with the somewhat unsettling information that the author can recognize but not define the phenomenon. This admission notwithstanding, Clark proceeds to mention numerous indicators of civilization, and perhaps an implicit definition does emerge in the course of his sweeping survey.

We find at once that "humane" and "reasonable" appear to be favored adjectives when an exemplar of civilization is described. Idealism is also seen to be important, along with confidence, vigor, and energy, although these qualities are sometimes shared with barbarians. Indeed, it is loss of confidence (plus exhaustion) which, according to Clark, destroys civilization. Historically, civilization seems closely related to war, and is always founded on military success. Yet refinement, spirituality, sincerity, tolerance, humanitarianism, and aristocratic detachment are also part of the story, although Clark cautions that *douceur de vivre* should not be confused with civilization. In any event, creativity alone is not a prerequisite: a brilliant artist like the Souillac master of the early 12th century, for example, is too fantastic and bizarre to be acceptable.

Civilization seems to have flourished best in courts and monasteries, the finest example being the Montefeltre court at Urbino in the 15th century. Chartres, the medieval and baroque cathedral, and prose, together with such eminences as Montaigne, Newton, Raphael, and Erasmus are all civilizing forces. Civilization is helped along by money and (narrowly) by printing, and it has flourished only in internationalist periods. Finally, to end a necessarily partial, though hopefully representative list, both the domestic architecture of colonial America and the Greenwich Hospital in England embody civilization, as does the 18th-century recognition of the proper place of women in society.

On the negative side, a place in civilization is denied to the following, among others: Hogarth (whose art has insufficient beauty), the traditions of Northern Europe, late medieval England, Henry VIII's court, Mannerism, 17th-century Germany, and excessive wealth. In view of this inchoate catalogue, one must be forgiven for failing to see what Clark means when he says at one point that Tahiti and similar islands "were not civilizations *in the sense of the word which I have been using*" (emphasis added).

But which sense is that? Heroic or reasonable? Vigorous or detached? Like Baroque Catholicism or 18th-century America? While no one would wish to deny that European civilization has presented many faces to the world—and Clark indicates admirably the difference between a Beethoven and a Montaigne—unless there is some unifying principle on which his interpretation is based, the reader can only be baffled. Clearly Clark does not see civilization as it is seen by many scholars today: namely, as the set of beliefs, thoughts, and tastes that informs an entire society, and is manifested in political institutions, religion, economic behavior, family patterns, morality, landholding, social relations, as well as in philosophy, art, and literature. According to this view, any society that is sufficiently cohesive and long-lasting to develop a set of common attitudes, and is also capable of creative expression, qualifies as a "civilization." (And under the terms of this definition, one might plausibly argue that Tahiti has made the grade.)

CLARK obviously comes to the issue from an entirely different angle, and his book is in fact quite clearly in the long-established tradition of *Geistesgeschichte*—the history of the spirit, culture, or intellect of an age—which is perhaps best exemplified by Jacob Burckhardt's *Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. But how different this book is from Burckhardt's. Even if one does not allow for more than a century of scholarship since Burckhardt wrote, one could point to the enormous gap in purpose and responsibility between that classic

THEODORE K. RABB, *a new contributor, teaches history at Princeton University and is co-editor of* The Journal of Interdisciplinary History.

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and *Civilisation*. For Burckhardt took seriously the need to define one's terms and to look at a whole society. Clothing and cookbooks received as much attention as Raphael. Clark, by contrast, regards "civilization" not as a means of describing society, but as an independent and absolute ideal attained occasionally by a few men who by their efforts manage to pull "mankind a few steps up the hill" every now and again. This emphasis enables him to concentrate on the subjects that chiefly interest him—style, "advances" in thought and expression, and the creations of a few towering geniuses—but to ignore the interesting and important issues that ought to be the first concern of anyone writing on this subject today. After all, one of the masterpieces written in the century since Burckhardt is Freud's *Civilization and Its Discontents,* which considered civilization to be an influence that repressed humanity, heightened guilt, and tempered happiness: the antithesis of nature. Civilization is *the* term by which modern man defines himself, and over which he argues with a passion that once was reserved for Virtue or Faith. Yet none of this is even considered by Clark.

What is so troubling is that a book essentially designed to take a quick, random look at a few of the glories of European culture should assume so grandiose a framework. Clearly "civilization" here means little more than a burst of creativity or a change in sensibility, and indeed one is left with an overall impression of a romp through Western art, poetry, and music, taken in Burckhardt's spirit—relishing the marvelous things Europeans have produced—but with none of Burckhardt's profound and perceptive historical analyses. If Clark had really used these cultural achievements as a way of exploring the meaning of "civilization," his book could still be considered important, but since he seems merely to be describing some of his own favorite artists, poets, and composers, the reader might find far greater substance and understanding, presented with no less elegance, in H. W. Janson's *History of Art* or E. H. Gombrich's *The Story of Art.*

The book's intended audience is as puzzling as its theme. As is well known, the published volume is based on programs originally presented on BBC television and subsequently shown in this country on the NET educational television network. From this one might infer that *Civilisation* was intended for the *cognoscenti,* but in fact the heroes are entirely predictable, and even the anecdotes—Beethoven tearing out the first page of the *Eroica*—will be familiar to anyone with a minimal grounding in the history of European art and thought. Perhaps, instead, the entire venture was meant to provide an introduction to Western culture for the uninitiated. If so, a number of basic responsibilities have been ignored, not so much in what should have been covered (although the absence of Dominic, Aquinas, Calvin, Pascal, Velázquez, Locke, Leibniz, Lessing, and Brahms, to name a few, must give pause) as in the attitudes expressed.

Civilisation is subtitled "A Personal View," and there is nothing wrong with that, but when judgments become so personal that they seriously distort the historical record, they should not be inflicted on those seeking an introduction to the subject. And it is worth pointing out here not only that the book has already become a best-seller, but that both the book and the film series (which costs thousands of dollars) are being sold to two-year junior and community colleges throughout the country, obviously for use as basic texts in courses on Western Civilization. Which leads us to the next question—what attitudes toward the past and toward various people will the neophyte, struggling to appreciate Europe's creative achievements, imbibe from *Civilisation*?

He will find, first, that much seems to be inexplicable—not only the meaning of "civilization," but also such diverse matters as the effect of the Crusades ("I simply don't know"), the Terror in the French Revolution (no explanation beyond "communal sadism"), and modern art. There is not much more clarification in the sentence, "Well, that's the medieval mind," which is offered as an interpretation of the paradoxical blending of the pagan with the Christian. And Dürer, we learn, "was a very strange character." Yet such mystification is surely not necessary, since extensive work has been done on all these problems and plausible interpretations have been offered by a number of scholars.

The reader will also find that merits and demerits are awarded with lordly assurance, but little justification. Historians, he will be told, consider the 10th century as barbarous as the 7th because it lacked political or written achievements. This seems to suggest the nonexistence of Hugh Capet, Otto the Great, and Canute, as well as to ignore the founding of the oldest surviving representative assembly, the Allthing, and the redaction of Beowulf, not to mention the Golden Age of Cordoba. In a similar vein one will discover that the Middle Ages did not read the Ancients with insight, which is hard to reconcile with the pervasive influence of Aristotle in the 13th century. As for Leonardo, he was not truly a Renaissance man since his obsessive curiosity places him not with all those Italian writers of manuals, investigators of perspective, overseas explorers, and the like, but in the late 17th century (the era of quietism, the genteel salon, Boileau's rules of poetry, and the restraints of classicism?).

Moving to the 16th century, one learns about the brutal Northerners, particularly the Germans. "Northern man," as revealed in a few sculptured faces, is more serious and earnest than his Italian counterpart (Savonarola?); he seeks truth; he is hysterical. His "earthy, animal hostility to reason and decorum" is inimical to civilization, and the Hussite movement is mentioned only because it almost wiped out the courtly civilization of Bohemia. Germans are easily excited (in contrast to the Italians!) and their uneasiness has been a "nuisance" to the rest of Europe (while their inability to develop a clear prose style has been a disaster). The North in the 16th century was full of bullies (unlike Italy, with its *condottiere* and Cesare Borgia?), though "these de-

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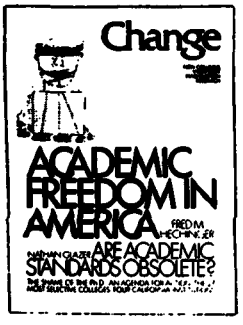

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structive national characteristics" were not present in the 1490's, which was an internationalist age. Presumably they all bubbled to the surface only when Luther appeared on the center of the stage.

Shades of the 19th century! If Clark reveals anywhere how the scholarship of the last half century has passed him by, it is here, in these simplistic efforts to uncover "national character." And the poor Germans continue to do badly, because after the Reformation they remain inarticulate until 1700. Which appears to mean that we must count as nought the remarkable growth of German universities in this period, the country's preeminence in publishing and the book trade (why else was William Harvey's *De Motu Cordis* first published in Germany?), and such leading European thinkers as Böhme, Comenius, Pufendorf, and even Leibniz. It is a rather tall order in the service of a "personal view."

Only Spain does worse. Although Scotland in the 18th century qualifies for inclusion thanks to Hume, Adam Smith, and the Adamses, nothing the Spaniards did is of equivalent importance. Only Cervantes and a few saints and Jesuits managed to "enlarge the human mind," which means that medieval Spain, by any measure one of the most important of Clark's "civilizing forces" in European history, has to be ignored. Although the Vikings do manage to slip into the story because they contributed "the spirit of Columbus," the *actual* patrons of Columbus are evidently less significant. Ximenes, the mystics, Las Casas, Spanish chivalry and drama —all can be left out because, after all, Spain "has simply remained Spain." Impeccable logic, but did not Holland, too, remain Holland in the 17th century, never really becoming a part of some elusive European mainstream?

Possibly the most questionable of Clark's interpretations is his assessment of the Reformation. While one can agree that Protestants destroyed many lovely images, it is both misleading and untrue to assert that "the motive wasn't so much religion as an instinct to destroy anything comely" because people were enraged by "incomprehensible values." It would be difficult to imagine a more complete misunderstanding—the Protestants knew *exactly* what values the images represented, and they were bent on transforming those values. Their motives, moreover, were *entirely* religious; their overwhelming aim, to simplify religion, was firmly rooted in a comprehensive set of beliefs. Although they smashed the statues and windows which had perverted Christ's unadorned message, nothing could have been further from their minds than the wish simply to destroy comely things. And it is equally untrue to say that "religion [was] of course being used as a pretext for political ambitions" in the wars of religion, implying that nobody was really fighting for his faith.

A FINAL troubling thesis is Clark's linking of civilization with war. While one might agree that only military success provides the stability civilization needs (though there are exceptions, such as Switzerland), it does not follow that one must accept as irrefutable Ruskin's dictum that great art appears only in nations of soldiers. Late Elizabethan England was certainly no nation of soldiers, nor was Melville's America, Scott's Scotland, or Van Eyck's Flanders, all of which did rather better than Sparta or Gustavus Adolphus's Sweden. And Clark abandons consistency when he makes brutality inimical to civilization. Richard II's murder sends civilization flying out the window, while Sir Thomas More occupies the small patch of civilization that existed between Richard III's and Henry VIII's murders. If Henry's court (which, incidentally, More did *not* serve "against his will") was uncivilized because of the executions committed there—and despite the presence of Holbein, Wyatt, and others —how was it possible for Lorenzo de Medici to rise above the killings which followed the Pazzi conspiracy? It would seem that murder fails to interfere with civilization only when the art with which it is associated is so great that it must be included in this survey.

Clark endorses the unexceptionable sentiments that knowledge is preferable to ignorance and that men should learn from history. On both counts one must wonder why he joins the fashionable but shrill parade of alarmists about computers. Machines, he suggests, are always enemies of civilization (unless they happen to be early printing presses), and the fact that machines are capable of increasing knowledge, or that history has often shown them to be responsible for great creativity, is not deemed relevant. In an almost Marcusean vein (what bedfellows!) Clark asserts that machines are the means by which a minority keeps the rest of us in subjection. Presumably this blanket condemnation extends to the computer's life-saving applications in such different fields as medicine and flood control, but that should not be too surprising since neither medical advances nor Darwin is given a place in *Civilisation*.

Although these opinions might be considered part of the "personal" view Clark is propounding, they border on what might more accurately be called prejudice, and those who use this book as an introduction to Western culture should beware. It is possible that they may be no more than confused by occasional elliptical references to subjects otherwise not dealt with—Aquinas, Tasso, Pascal, Fragonard, etc.—or by such errors as the splendid schoolboy howler of spelling "principal" as "principle" (a secretary transcribing the TV soundtrack?). But far more serious is the likelihood that they will be receiving a distorted impression of Europe's past, and present, if they accept Clark's pet peeves in the spirit in which they are presented: as unimpeachable interpretations.

ARE all these strictures misplaced, too harsh for what is, after all, nothing but a bit of fluff? Well, they would be if it were indeed fluff. But the educational-TV imprimatur, combined with best-selling and textbook status, indicate that these thirteen essays are likely to provide the framework for the way in which the reasonably intelligent

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and/or educated of the 1970's will view Western culture. It is true that *Civilisation* contains much that is perceptive and elegant. "The smile of reason" is a happy invention for a discussion of the Enlightenment; the chapter on German Rococo is a splendid and graceful excursus; many of the figures, notably Charlemagne, Raphael, Bernini, Rembrandt, Coleridge, and Brunel, are admirably presented; and there are stimulating insights throughout. Taking art to be Renaissance man's means of expression is a most fruitful perception, as is the illuminating comment that Raphael's idealization of ordinary human beings deadened both truth and morality, and ultimately produced what Clark calls a "hideous" reaction in modern times. The idea that creativity blossoms when austerity is followed by relaxation is also appealing, though one might still prefer Milton to Dryden. But occasional delights like these cannot make up for shortcomings that are, at root, an abandonment of responsibility.

It is all very well to express one's pride in what Europeans have accomplished, and every man is entitled to a few prejudices about the workings of history. When, however, one's purpose is to instruct and enlighten, not merely to expatiate on one's likes and dislikes, then one has certain obligations to one's readers. The latest in scholarship should not be ignored, precision should not be evaded, and condemnations should not be issued lightly. No one can deny that the BBC photographers and technicians have produced a magnificent film, a sumptuous unfolding of beauty that cannot fail to move its viewers—even in real life Michelangelo's David does not have so striking an impact—and for this alone the junior colleges' money has perhaps been well spent. The book maintains these high standards, for it is handsomely laid out and beautifully illustrated, but neither commentary nor text comes close to achieving such consistent excellence. A great opportunity for education and enlightenment has been missed.

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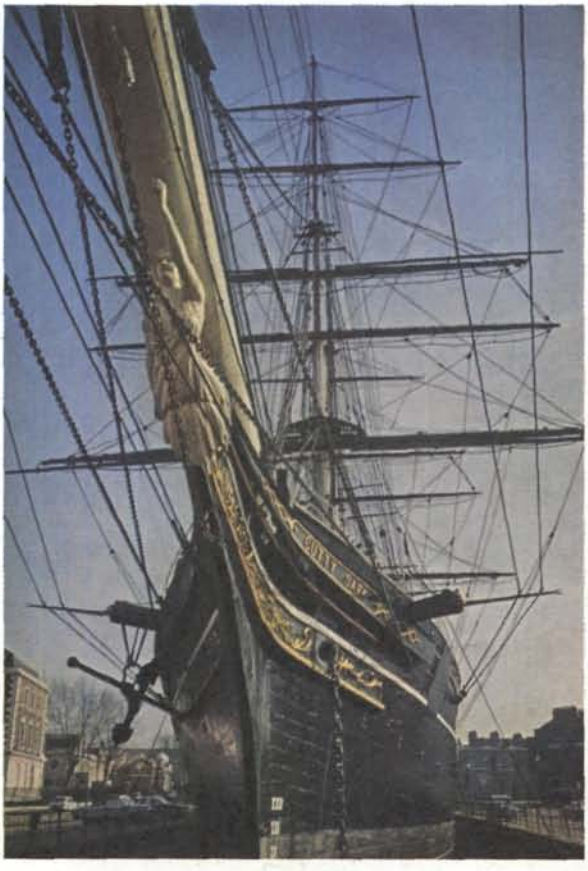

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